

In Touch

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IN TOUCH

celebrating gay awareness

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june 1974

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OUR COVER: Beautiful Wayne Metcalf (page 32). Photo by Kenn Duncan.

This Page: Rick Gates (page 16), Rick Gutterridge (page 22), Richard Oliver and John Ierardi (page 28), Ron Fraser (page 44) and Jay and Mark (page 64).

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keeping *In Touch*

Really dig your magazine; I've bought all of them and will buy all the future ones.

Two points: I'd like to see a nude feature article on that cool dude Brian Redfield. Soon!

Also, I'd like to see you review the latest gay flicks more and straight cinema less. I can find out about the Hollywood studios' movies just about any

place, but *you're* the guys who keep me in touch with what's going on in the gay world.

Best wishes to you in the future. You've got a hot item, and I think it will sell big.

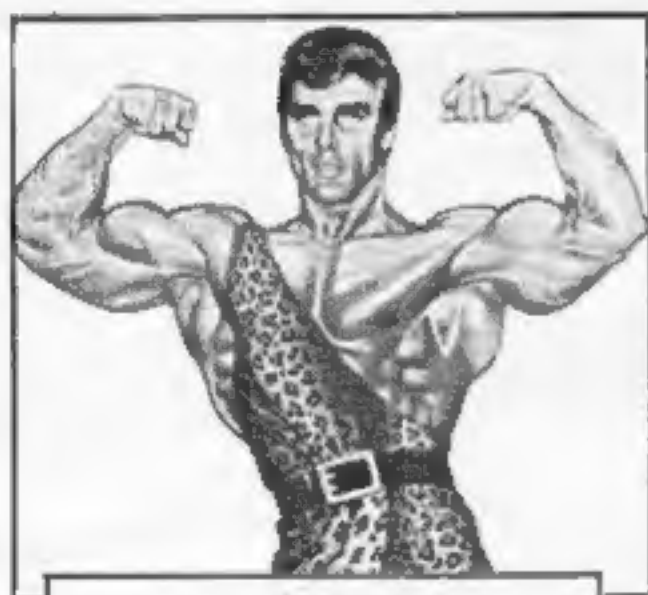
Sincerely,
A San Mateo Reader

Brian Redfield is in temporary retirement. But we're still trying. —Editor.

COLT

presents the newest edition of the best male physique magazine . . .

MANPOWER!



This 7th issue of MANPOWER! is the first all-art edition we've ever published and it's a smash! To our many new customers, the Art of Rip Colt will be a revelation; to our charter members, here is the Best of the Best. For everyone, there are all new, never-published-before drawings and paintings — wait 'til you see the paintings in full color! Included is the premier appearance of two new, young physique artists we find very promising. This deluxe 52 page magazine (size 8½" x 11") is a once in a lifetime occasion you won't want to miss.

MANPOWER! #7 \$7.50

THE COLT STUDIO
Box 187-N, Village Station
New York City 10014

You must state that you are 21 or over before your order can be filled. Thank you.

Dear Editor and Staff:

Your April 1974 issue is superb! My sincere and deepest congratulations! I especially enjoyed the story of my favorite star Miss MAE WEST.

But I was truly exhilarated with the healthy and stunning looks of Gary Brandenburg. In my opinion he is the best-looking fellow that has appeared in your publication. Would we have the chance to see more of him? By this I mean, maybe a complete story and in the middle section. Could you run a story on him? And what is the New Clear Universal Foundation that you mentioned twice in your issue?

Keep up with your good work!

Sincerely yours,
Cesar D'Aversa

To all who wrote regarding Miss West, our thanks. Mr. Leopold researched the article with great care as the photos revealed. We understand that Miss West was pleased also.

We hope that at some time in the near future we can present a more extensive layout and story on Gary as we agree with all those who wrote in appreciation of him. —Editor.

Dear IT:

Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful! That's the only way I can describe David Miller in your latest issue.

As an ex-marine, though, I just wonder what the effect of appearing in a feature article in a gay magazine will have on a young lance corporal, working in the motor pool at Camp Pendleton.

I'm looking forward to seeing your announcement of an "In Touch Portrait" of David. Keep up the good work.

Sincerely,
Bob from N.H.

The response to David has been gratifying to say the least as he is a "super" young man. We see a little more of him on Page 88 of this issue and a lot more in the Portrait that is now available. In the meantime, David continues to do his job as a marine. He tells us that he has had some harassment from individuals on the base but far more approval and support. (Could it be that the world is less hostile than we often suspect?) David has also received a couple of serious offers for a Broadway bound show which he is considering when he leaves the camp in late summer. We wish him the best. —Editor.

In Touch comments

There are Gays, of course, who regard the antic phenomenon known as "Streaking" to be inappropriate, in execrably bad taste, and even somehow threatening — particularly when it spreads so far that a youngish ad executive would dare to besmirch the pomp and circumstance of the Academy Awards. Is nothing, alas, sacred? Will we have shameless young men, not even decently tumescent, next streaking under the long blue nose of that great adman of the skies, Billy Graham? And how that leperous voice will tremble as it warns of Signs of the Times, warns of the terrible degeneration of this age, of a decline in morals of such proportions that the preacher himself can swallow all the swill of Watergate and yet gag on a streaker!

But, perhaps, when all the pompous theologues and psychologists have pontificated in the square press about "escape from responsibility," or "a subconscious wish to rush back to the womb," or a "diabolical denial of the sovereignty of the Almighty," just perhaps this sudden fad can suggest to streakers and spectators alike that personal freedom can be seized in larger and even more gratifying chunks than these 40-second dashes.

Our chief worry ought to be, not that streakers will demoralize themselves or society by those sudden bursts of public nudity, but rather that it might prove *only* a fad, all too transient, that having once experienced so zany a liberation, too many will say, "I've done it once. Now I can settle down to a lifetime of squareness."

But the streaking fad is assuredly part of something deeper in today's public psyche than such preceding fads as goldfish swallowing. Streakers in large numbers are doing what would have been unthinkable a few years ago.

If David Niven seemed more concerned with the penile dimensions of the Awards show streaker (TV cameramen kept their audience in ignorance on such details) than with what would once have been regarded as the awful monstrosity of such an act, that too is a sign of the times, a heartening one.

This writer has long been one who

without apology took pleasure in viewing the well-displayed male form (and I do not assume that nudity is the only aesthetically pleasing form of display). One gratification of both the streaking movement and of the sudden blossoming of new-type women's magazines, of which I am an unabashed fan, is that we are now presented with a broader range of male types and poses that we generally saw in gay publications. Not that the ones we did see were unhandsome or uninteresting, but it is a common weakness of editor-publishers to justify their own narrow tastes with the excuse that "our readers aren't interested in *that* type." Not only have the utterly fetching youths whose unposed passage has been recorded in many a newspaper differed in several ways from the models most magazine publishers have recruited, but the very unposed bravado of the streak gives them a sudden freshness and realism often lacking in the rigid tableaux of our gay adventure magazines.

I frankly have high hopes for the streaking phase, hopes that it may lead to higher things, to a new regard for our bodies, old or young, to new forms of vigorous human intercourse, even to new styles of worship of the Lord of creation, who, after all, did not fashion us with figleaves or trousers.

And might it be too much to hope that it could help to purify our much befouled political scene? We need such a freshening, nationally and locally. The manner of many of our younger local candidates has much of the brash honesty of our streakers. Those at least who

have sought out the gay vote seem willing to make frank and full disclosure of their intentions and connections.

By the time you read this, the primaries may have eliminated one or two of those soliciting gay support (Kranz, Selwyn, Moretti, Edelman, both Norris and Bugliosi, Stanbery, Karabian, Fusilier, Davis and others) and we will have to concentrate on the most urgent races, and in some, swing to the next best choices.

We suggest, simply, that any and all political candidates, of whatever party or persuasion, should submit before all prospective voters to the frankest possible sort of Full Disclosure. This proposal merits the earnest support of all fair-minded citizens who are fed up with wolves in sheep's clothing. Let every campaigner henceforth slow down, strip down and show the voters what we need to see—not trigger-fast, the way our streakers do it, but real slow, so there will be no chance of sleight of hand. We all know that the prick is faster than the eye.

As gay old Clifton Webb once told politician-to-be Shirley Temple, who he suspected (in a film, of course) of wearing padding in a sensitive area, "Young lady, you ought not put forward claims which you aren't prepared to back up!"

Too long our politicians have come before us in excessive and deceptive padding. They ought all be required to stand the test of Full Public Disclosure—even the Grey Eminence on Pennsylvania Avenue. That way it might not take nearly so many speeches or smirks for him or his kind to indeed make everything perfectly clear.

—JIM KEPNER



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The CALENDAR

S

M

T

THEATRE
★ AUCTIONS ★
★ BALS ★
★ CONTESTS ★
★ TOURS ★
★ Galas ★
★ SHOWS ★
★ MEETINGS ★

2

1:00 p.m.
NEW MEMBER'S BRUNCH
 MCC Social Hall
 1050 S. Hill St.
 Los Angeles

3

8:00 p.m.
MAGGIE AWARDS
 International Hotel
 6225 Century Blvd.
 Los Angeles

4

Last night at
 7:00 p.m.
**"LEADING A GAY LIFE
 WITH OR WITHOUT
 A MATE"**
 UCLA Open Extension Class
 Graduate School of
 Management
 Room #2250
 Instructor: Norm Lewis

9

10

7:30 p.m.
**MCC ROLLER SKATING
 PARTY**
 Hollywood Roller Bowl
 Sunset at St. Andrews
 Hollywood

11



17



23

1:00 p.m.
**GAY COMMUNITY SERVICES
 CENTER ANNUAL
 OPEN HOUSE**
 1614 Wilshire Blvd.
 Los Angeles

24

Yesterday at
 5:30 p.m.
**MCC FELLOWSHIP
 POTLUCK DINNER**
 MCC Social Hall
 1050 S. Hill St.
 Los Angeles

25

8:30 p.m.
JEAN SIMMONS
 opens in
A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC
 Shubert Theatre
 2020 Avenue of the Stars
 Century City

30

12:00 Noon
**GAY FREEDOM DAY
 PARADE**
 San Francisco Parade Route
 San Francisco

3:00 p.m.
**CHRISTOPHER STREET
 WEST PARADE**
**THEME: UNITED WE
 STAND**
 Hollywood Parade Route

Followed by:
RALLY AND DANCE
 De Longpre Park
 at 7:30 p.m.
 Hollywood

for JUNE

W

T

F

S



6

2:00 p.m.
MCC LUAU
Will Rogers State Park Beach

7

All Day through the 9th
VARIANT SEXUAL
BEHAVIOR
Institute for Study of Human
Resources, Forum
735-4337 or ONE, Inc.
for location

1

8:00 p.m.
First "OLD MOVIE
NIGHT"
MCC Social Hall
1050 S. Hill St.
Los Angeles

8

8:00 p.m.
ORANGE COUNTY MCC
BUILDING FUND DANCE
1259 Victoria St.
Costa Mesa

8:30 p.m.
TUBSTRIP
starring
CAL CULVER
and
JIM CASSIDY
opens officially at
Hollywood Center Theatre
1451 No. Las Palmas
Hollywood

1 2

1 3

1 4

8:30 p.m.
MCC DANCE
MCC Social Hall
1050 S. Hill St.
Los Angeles

1 5

8:00 p.m.
S.I.R. 10th Anniversary Party
California Hall
Polk and Turk Streets
San Francisco



2 1

2 2

5:00 p.m.
VAN NESS LIBERATION
HOUSE CABARET DANCE
AND DINNER
Trouper's Auditorium
1625 N. La Brea
Hollywood

8:30 p.m.
ROBERT PRESTON
opens in
MACK AND MABEL
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion
The Music Center
135 N. Grand Ave.
Los Angeles

2 6

2 7

8:30 p.m.
SWEET CHARITY
opens for a four-week run
Off-Broadway Theatre
314 "F" St.
San Diego

2 8

10:00 a.m. to Midnight
through the 30th
CHRISTOPHER STREET
WEST CARNIVAL
Southeast corner of
Sunset Blvd. and
Las Palmas Ave., Hollywood

2 9

8:00 p.m.
MR. COWBOY CONTEST
The Covered Wagon
278 Eleventh (at Folsom)
San Francisco



IN TOUCH will be happy to receive listings for our Calendar. To be included, listing must be in our offices not later than 10th of month preceding issue (Sept. 10 for November, Oct. 10 for December, etc.). Please include location, address and time as well as other pertinent material.

WHERE IT'S AT

BARS

BATHS

Restaurants

THEATRES

Shops

LOS ANGELES by DAVED JADE

CRUISE AND SCORE SITES

BEE JAYS — Rowdy gang refuses not to have a great time. Everybody welcome, lots of Levi, on the park across from USO and baths. 750 India, San Diego.

BIG BROTHER — Seaside cowboys and cowgirls accord a lively mosaic with a poolroom temper. 1616 Washington, Venice.

BUNKHOUSE — Kicky roundup bunch with jaunty cowboy bartenders. A few retired rodeo stars hold the fort between shifts of popularity. Never can tell when the rodeo is in town. 4519 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles towards Silver Lake from the 1170 in Hollywood.

BUZZBY'S — New, very groovy place which introduces a new concept of seating. There are bleachers and you sit around and face the other customers. Macrame chandeliers, sunburst and stars illuminate the ceiling. Original and charming. 1436 Polk Street, San Francisco.

CISSY'S SALOON — Pool table, plants, a urinal and kooky hangings on the walls. Get the image? For heads and long hairs. 1590 Folsom Street, San Francisco.

CLUB — Assortment, leather nights, Sunday Brunch bunch swells to early afternoon crush. 2501 Kettner, San Diego.

CLUB CHATEAU — Speakeasy atmosphere found outside of town, brightly lit with lights on the roof seen from a distance. Extremely cordial hosts and honest friendly crowd. WEEKENDS. 16235 Foothill, Fontana.

COVERED WAGON — Afterhours spot, with snack bar and lounge. Swimming pool, where mad things go on. Decor now features windows, plants and chandeliers. 278 11th Street, San Francisco.

DETOUR — Music programmed for anticipation adds to tense feeling of expectant leather. Good spot to get jived up for cruisy neighborhood. Just up the street from the OUTCAST, should make link-up soon. Weeknights more relaxed. If there ever will be a construction worker bar this will be it. Watch out. Corner Sunset and Santa Monica in Silver Lake at 1087 Manzanita, Los Angeles.

D.O.K. WEST — Most all the gangs come together for Garden Grove's big scene. Sociable types bump elbows with cruisers. 12889 Garden Grove, Garden Grove.

EL CAPITAN — Established local fun spot.

Almost raunchy atmos houses very friendly and boisterous crowd. Jovial barmaids. Packed on weekends, small weekday crowds. 13825 Hawthorne Blvd., Hawthorne.

FALCON'S LAIR — Western, leather, and followers. Weekend gang swells out into the patio and up onto the game room. Weekdays strictly cruising downstairs and games upstairs. 742 N. Highland, Hollywood.

FE-BE'S — Leather bar, long popular with the bike and Levi set. Has had its troubles with the police, but seems to keep going. Heated action. 1501 Folsom Street, San Francisco.

GAF — All purpose bar-club for Palm Springs area. Entertainment some nights, crowds for dancing, with time for cruising. 67901 Hwy. 111, Cathedral City.

GOLIATH'S — Continuous go-go boys, films, tape program, and restless crew have re-engaged the conspiracy to capture you in an excitement game. An experience with one thing in mind. 7011 Melrose Ave., West Hollywood.

GRIFF'S — Beer bottle bruisers, more serious hunky hornies, more easygoing western and leather have gathered large crowd here to avoid mob scenes elsewhere. Still prime. 5574 Melrose, Hollywood.

THE HUB — Mixed crowd converges on purpose. Busy poolroom waits at end of corridor bar. 7864 Santa Monica Blvd., Hollywood.

JAGUAR — Going towards neighborhood gathering. Still mixed but a lot less leather, western, and decadence. Weekdays mostly sociable. Sunday conventions still planned. 7511 Santa Monica, Hollywood.

JIMBO'S — Jim, formerly of Jim's Corral, Long Beach, has moved out to beautiful Santa Barbara to give it its first healthy taste of leather and Levi. 4135 State St., Santa Barbara.

JOE'S — Kicky bar, lots of Levi and leather. Large adjoining game room with plenty of cruising. Early crowd gets mature but never elegant. Late crowd gets raunchy and always ready. 2682 Long Beach Blvd., Long Beach.

LARRY'S — Larry must be one of the most popular guys in the gay leather community. His new bar, a clean, barren, slightly poshy dungeon is L.A.'s first liquor/leather bar. Hot and heavy cruising, mostly leather with plenty of real bikes. Melrose Avenue near Van Ness, Los Angeles.

SAN FRANCISCO by DOUGLAS DEAN

LIL LUCY'S — Social gatherings on weekdays easily transform to young heavy cruising mob on weekends. 1200 E. Broadway, Long Beach.

MIKE'S CORRAL — Some of the hunkiest numbers in the Southland have discovered where the rustling is good. Has become stompin' grounds for hot Levi and leather. Just off the Artesia Frwy. at Cherry, 2020 Artesia Blvd., North Long Beach.

MIND SHAFT — It's a blast, this one. An immediate sensation from its opening. Wooden beams, kerosene lamps, dim lighting. Front and rear bars, with dancing under a gazebo, if you can believe it. Restrooms are labeled Ms. and Studs, which gives an idea of what goes on. Wild action, fighting the mob. 2140 Market Street, San Francisco.

MINE SHAFT — Levi and leather, plenty of cruising. Weeknights get raunchy and mature; weekends cruisy and younger. Sunday buffet draws some seafood. 1720 E. Broadway, Long Beach.

MIRROR ROOM — Very mixed and lively. Wilshire Guys and Gals together, but not a family affair. Weekend crowd extra jovial. Clean, healthy, laughter and liquor. 1600 W. 6th, Wilshire Center, Los Angeles.

NO NAME — Another favorite spot for the Levi set. Pretty far-out action here, it's rumored, and caution is the order of the day. Pool table, bulletin boards (with sex invitations) and a ballroom in the rear. 1347 Folsom Street, San Francisco.

ONE STEP BEYOND — Next door to the Climax in Garden Grove, the big boys now have somewhere to play in Levi and sawdust and heavy cruising. 11918 Garden Grove, Garden Grove.

PADDLE BOARD II — Daytime beach bar, nighttime cruising and socializing, afterhours mobs, dancing and coffee, must score. 1417 Pacific Coast Hwy., Redondo Beach.

THE PUB — Tourists, beach boys, beautiful, and locals meet every afternoon in well-mixed casual atmosphere. Weekends are county mob scene, very mixed with noticeable absence of leather or ladies. Good jukebox and dancing. 224 Helena, Santa Barbara.

RAMROD — Leather forever in this well-known and highly frequented bike crowd hangout. Movies, cash drawings. Tight t-shirts, beards and boots, and dangling keys. 1225 Folsom Street, San Francisco.

RED STAR SALOON — In front of the Folsom Street Barracks bathhouse. A wild, funky place, where the slave/master routine is very much the order of the day. Belts and spikes and everything nice (?). 1145 Folsom Street, San Francisco.

THE ROUND-UP — Grooviest Western Bar of the Wildest Street in the West, so they claim. Special events, a trippy crowd. Levi's and leather jackets much in evidence. Hunky numbers as regular patrons. 298 Sixth Street at Folsom, San Francisco.

RUSTY NAIL — Slowly a *stampede* of star-dust cowboys and beautiful bike boys are attracting a semi-raunchy mob. Good weekend cruising. 7993 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood.

SWING — Largest cross-section, cruising for everyone, always busy, come and find your corner. 3175 India, San Diego.

THE STUD — A kinky fun spot with liquor and leather has become part of the new scene. Handy for freeway fliers, Hollywood Frwy., Vermont off-ramp. On Melrose just west of Vermont, Los Angeles.

STUD — Another leather place, well patronized by the jeans and T-shirts. Weekend nights and Sunday afternoons are often very groovy. S&M talent available. 1535 Folsom Street, San Francisco.

TOAD HALL — After two fires, caused by arsonists, this funky bar has risen (again) from the flames, just like the Phoenix. Young, trippy crowd, longhairs and heads. Jukebox, pool tables. You are warned by the management, however, to "leave your pleasure trips at home." 482 Castro Street, San Francisco.

TRAFFIC JAM — Humpy bartenders hold the fort for late crowd. Mixed types with some western and some seamen. Bar broken down to three sections: socializing up front, game play around the pool table, and serious cruising in the back room. 4663 Long Beach Blvd., Long Beach.

TRUCK STOP — T-shirts and tattoos, Levi and sawdust, beer and cruising. Bike conventions on Sundays. Always kinky and jumping weekends. 13257 Ventura Blvd., Studio City.

TWIN PEAKS — Former dull straight bar, now a trippy hangout for a far-out crowd. Mostly jeans and jackets, but some more elegant types. Large windows permitting street view, Tiffany lamps, small bar and tables and balcony for cruising. Cocktail hour Saturday and Sunday afternoons a mind-blower. Corner Market and Castro Streets, San Francisco.

THE WILD SIDE — Los Angeles' Southside now has its own hot spot. Mobs coming in from South Bay as well as South Central. Sure to become a new landmark in the changing L.A. scene. Plenty of local neighborhood spots in area. Soon to add afterhours. 1321 N. La Brea, Inglewood.

WOOD SHED — Explorers have discovered the Wild West, down Melrose from Griff's and Larry's to The Stud and now on down the trail there is a bar for the sagebrush boys. Where the real Marlboro men round up, just

down Hoover from the Outcast. On Hoover south of Melrose, Silver Lake, Los Angeles.

MUST SCORE TIME

BOOT CAMP — Special events for bike and Levi crowd. Features Mr. Jockey Shorts contest as well as other competitions and games. Very macho, very much a turn-on, this place. 1010 Bryant Street, San Francisco.

CLIMAX — Snack bar and canten for young lively dancers, becomes afterhours nightclub for the whole town mix. One of the lively spots most lively in all of So. Cal. 11918 Garden Grove, Garden Grove.

FOLSOM PRISON — Butch, wild bar, with Wheel 'n Deal Game every Sunday at 4:30 and 10:30. Also holds groovy slave auctions every Monday at 10:30 P.M. with prizes for participants. 1898 Folsom Street, San Francisco.

THE HAYLOFT — Western bar gets mixed afterhours. Known for its fine films. Layout specifically designed for good cruising keeps restless mob roaming. ESTABLISHED. Good crowd before and afterhours. 11818 Ventura Blvd., Studio City.

JERRY'S HOLE — Young and pretty things just keep dancing while the rest of San Diego flows in for afterhours. Heavy cruising in patio. 1858 San Diego, San Diego.

KOKPIT — Active, groovy group gathers in this small but famous bar near the Tenderloin. Everybody very friendly, and somebody for everybody. Cocktail hour gets the celebrity

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Los Angeles, Ca. 90017

crowd, in spades, 301 Turk Street, San Francisco.

MIDNIGHT SUN — A Castro Valley hangout, for heads and longhairs. Very plain decor, but good vibes for those who dig the Levi, FFA scene. Hunky tricks on all sides. 506 Castro Street, San Francisco.

NEW BELL — Another of Polkstrasse's most famous bars. Piano entertainment, with group singalong. Noisy. Regular parties and special events attract a happy crowd. 1203 Polk Street, San Francisco.

NAKED GRAPE — Small, usually crowded spot, where dancing and friendly mingling is encouraged. Low ceilings give it an intimate feeling. 2087 Market Street, San Francisco.

NOTHING SPECIAL — Another Castro Street bar, popular with a neighborhood clientele. Warm atmosphere, plenty of action. Young heads and longhairs. Jukebox and pool table. 469 Castro Street, San Francisco.

THE OUTCAST — Early hours heavy leather score, workout Levi score, kinky score. Gangs mix during afterhours, tangling through three-room cruising grounds. Santa Monica Blvd. at Virgil Ave. in Silver Lake, Los Angeles.

OUTER LIMITS — The whole town shows up afterhours, crowding chicken out onto the ultraviolet dance floor and filling all empty spaces; Tiffany trade poolroom find harmonious balance. 11918 Garden Grove in Garden Grove.

PENDULUM — A mixed clientele in this pop-

ular well-known bar. Castro Valley area brings out mostly the jeans and leather set. Dimly lit, good cruising. Free buffet every Sunday, 7 P.M. 4246 18th Street, San Francisco.

PHOENIX — Formerly a coffeehouse, now a popular gathering spot for the men in the vicinity. Large front bar with a food counter in the rear. Short orders: burgers, chili, soup, etc. Wire spool tables. Plenty of space to move around and observe the action. Mature clientele. 1035 Post Street, San Francisco.

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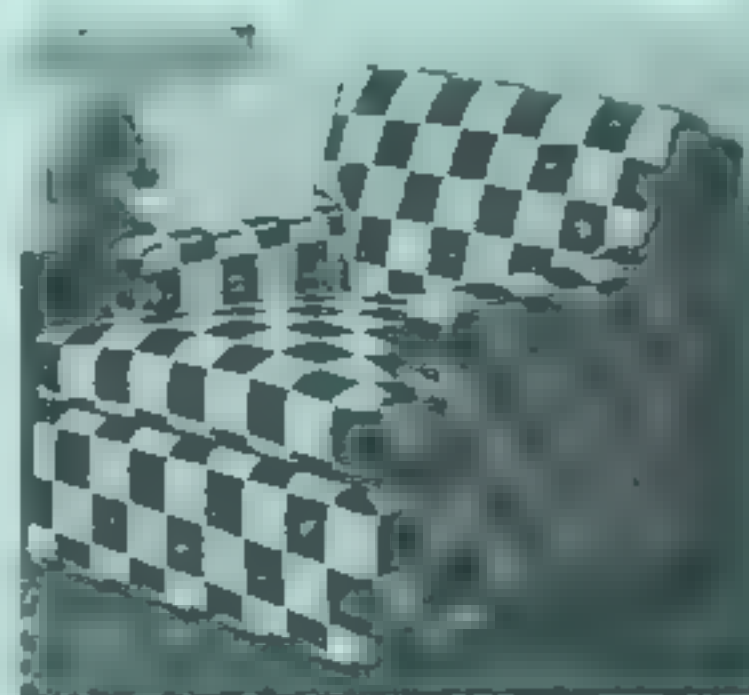
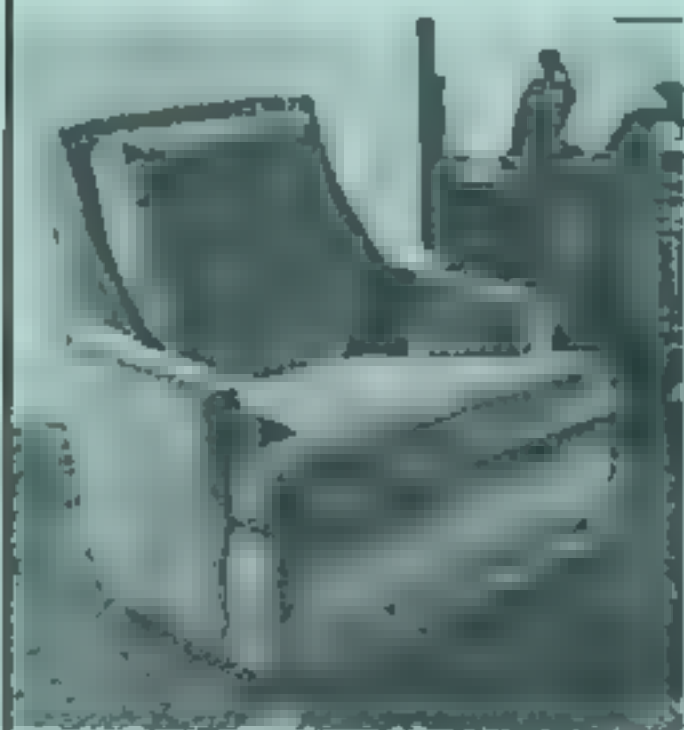
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Continued on Page 81

by Keith Schaefer
illustration by George Holimon



THE RISING SUN BEAMS GENTLY ON MY FRIEND

and then

his gentle frown can melt into a wispy smile
It warms his skin,

already softly warm;

deepening the bloom.

already hot in young awakening

His eyes ignite,

dark flashing flames within

that youthful blush

His soft hair shines

with morning highlight

blackness,

sweeping back across his

head in waves of

ebony

Contented,

he, in momentary absence.

reaches a place where boy and sun are one.

He slowly shuts his eyes

leans back his head and

stretches

All the lustful joy of living.

shows.

All the real stuff of deep-down Peace

is visible

upon his morning-face

Life is

under his control

this sun-lit day.

for he is Bright.

Alive.

and Handsomely Prepared

Geo. Holimon



Well, Nobody's Perfect

Rick Gates has been acting professionally now for some seven years, and it is to his misfortune that his first major starring role in a motion picture was as the male lead in *So Long, Blue Boy*. Last fall, this misguided little gay-oriented film played an uninspired week's run at the Egyptian Theatre in Hollywood, and then disappeared into the night, possibly never to be heard from again. Picketed by the Gay Media Task Force for its typically miserable, guilt-ridden gay characters and panned by the critics for one of the weakest scripts this side of Andy Warhol, *Blue Boy* had few redeeming factors, but one of these was its talented and attractive young star.

I first became aware of Rick Gates as an actor back in 1968, in a "CBS Playhouse" drama called "Saturday Adoption." He played the leading role, a "conscience-stricken liberal" college student who takes responsibility for a black youngster on the weekends, and who both teaches and learns from the kid. He showed a tremendous potential as an actor, and I waited for him to do more.

He had a small part in the Clint Eastwood vehicle, *Hang 'Em High*. (Yes, he was hung.) He was in *The Graduate*, and he turned up with amazing regularity in television commercials. More recently, he played major roles in such television series as "Bob and Carol and Ted and Alice," "Hawkins," "Toma," and "The Partridge Family." And he is soon to be seen in a major role in the feature film, *Angels of Mercy*. However, *So Long, Blue Boy* was his first important film role, and it is unfortunately well on its way to oblivion, shot down by an impossible script.

I must admit that I approached interviewing Rick with some trepidation. Gerald Gordon, director of *Blue Boy*, had warned me that Rick could be exasperatingly reticent and close-mouthed, and from other sources I heard the rumor that he was extremely "square." With all these second-hand tales in

mind, I began to have visions of something akin to the classic Peter Bogdanovich-John Ford interview, in which Ford's most verbose responses were "Yup" and "Nope"! It was with some relief and a soon-developed admiration, then, that I discovered Rick Gates to be a charming, soft-spoken, but highly articulate young man who could be considered "square" only if you are among those who believe that anybody who prefers sleeping with girls is "square."

Rick lives in a comfortable house just a few minutes' walk from the bustling heart of downtown Hollywood. The house is like Rick himself—quiet, modest, and withdrawn, yet immediately warm and friendly. The tastefully decorated home was bought during his five-year marriage to actress Veronica Cartwright, and he has continued to live there since their divorce nearly two years ago.

Unlike many actors, who are stricken with the show-business fever almost from infancy, Rick had no thoughts of becoming an actor until his senior year of high school. "I just fell into it," he explained to me with a sheepish grin. "I had always had more practical ambitions. I figured I would go away to Purdue and learn aeronautical engineering. I wanted to be an airline pilot, because I always wanted to have money and at least a modicum of freedom. Besides, I had always really wanted to be a writer, and I figured that as a pilot I would be able to support myself and still have enough time to myself to work on the writing. But then, in my senior year I had a couple of electives to fill up. Well . . . you know the kind of electives they offered in those days. I didn't want shop, so that didn't leave much except drama. I tried it, and I started doing shows like *The Crucible* and *The Adding Machine*. The ideas were so exciting, and the concept of being able to move and affect people . . . to communicate on that kind of level . . . well, it was just delirium."

Even then, however, Rick did not

give any serious consideration to a career in theatre. He enrolled at Cal State Palos Verdes as a psychology major, pursuing another field that had always interested him. "Plato said, 'The unexamined life is not worth living,'" he explained. "That says a lot to me. I want to be able to know what's going on . . . around me and inside me, as well. So, anyway, at the same time I was going to school, I was working in a lot of community theatre plays . . . just anything and everything I could get myself into. And it just so happened that a director who was directing me in *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* knew an agent here in town, and the director called him about me. It just sort of happened. It was the strangest series of fluke accidents. A year and a half after I did my first high school play, I was acting professionally."

"It's odd to imagine someone just drifting into show business," I commented, "because it is so fiercely competitive."

"Yeah. I found that out in a hurry," Rick sighed. "But I just happened to hit in the right time and at the right place, I guess. They were looking for a certain kind of freshness just then . . . a kind of naivete. And, boy, was that ever me! I was completely unsophisticated, in every sense of the word. Luckily, I had a strong enough sense of self not to be intimidated, though, and whenever parts came along for your wholesome, all-American eighteen-to-twenty-year-old, there I was."

So 1966 saw Rick off and running on a promising career as an actor. He did several commercials, the Clint Eastwood film, and, in December of 1968, the "CBS Playhouse" telecast. But then Uncle Sam sent him a Christmas present—his draft notice—and the career screeched to a halt. Rick managed to enlist in a Marine Corps Reserve unit, with only six months of active duty, but he remembers it as six of the longest months of his life. "It was like living in



a sewer, twenty-hour hours a day, for six months," he said. "The only way I made it through was knowing that somehow, somewhere in the far distant future, it was going to come to an end. And then after that, I had to go to reserve meetings, and the only way I made it through them was just getting so incredibly stoned that I didn't really care anymore. I made some really good friends in the Reserves, though. We were lucky enough to be in a communications unit, so we'd get our wires laid or whatever, and then we'd go off and hide somewhere, and smoke a lot of grass, and just stay away from people. I thought I came through it all incredibly well, but my family and my wife told me afterwards that I was really strange when I came back. And I'd go out on interviews to see people who had known me before, and they'd look at me like, 'Jesus, kid! It's good to see you back again, but, like, will you go away somewhere?' Part of it was the way I looked, I imagine. My hair was still awfully short. But a lot of it must have been my attitude. I must have had an awfully defensive, belligerent, unreasonable sort of attitude. Military training affects some people like that. Like, there was this guy I met in my reserve meetings, who had been a regular, and he seemed so healthy on the surface . . . but every now and then, I would see something. There was this whole side of him that was completely irrational. And almost scary. It was like the guy was capable of all of a sudden grabbing a machine gun and blowing his head off . . . his and everybody's around him. It was that degree . . . that kind of violence going on underneath. Really scary. Anyway, it took me quite a while to get it together again after that, and my career hasn't yet picked up the momentum it had before I went in the service."

Part of the problem, Rick readily admits, is the fact that he is basically a quiet, non-aggressive guy, quite unlike most actors. "I know it's stupid for me to be that way," he conceded. "I'm just

not giving myself a chance. I'm just not very good at pushing myself. In fact, I'm out and out terrible at pushing myself. I have friends who are really aggressive, and I wish that I could be that way. I have a tendency to sit back and be a non-participant. I guess I'm afraid of failing, or something. I'm sitting around and waiting for the world to come around and offer it to me . . . 'Gee, Rick, you're a nice guy. Won't you please be in my film?' But being a nice guy isn't enough. I've got to become a little more cutthroat!"

Rick's major income is derived from his television commercials. He has done dozens of them during his career, and the residuals keep him at least comfortable, if far from wealthy. Nonetheless, he says, he often has to force himself to get out of bed in the morning (or more accurately, the middle of the night) to answer an early-morning call to shoot a commercial. Does he actively dislike doing commercials, then, I asked

"Oh, no," he answered. "I enjoy it well enough. You simply have to find a way to make it interesting. You have to do that with everything you do, if you want to survive. But I can't bound out of bed and shout, 'Oh, boy! New challenges for me today!' It's challenging, but it's not the type of challenge I relish. I'd rather work on something exciting and worthwhile and just get a percentage of the profit, if there is one, than do some simple-minded commercial for several thousand dollars. And yet, on the other hand, I'd rather do commercials than television episodes. Commercials are at least honest . . . they're out to sell something and they don't pretend anything else. So much of television is just cardboard characters in formula plots, pretending to be new and original entertainment."

"And yet, you've done quite a bit of television," I pointed out. "Do you feel that you are being exploited as an actor?"

"Oh, no!" he replied with a grin. "I'm exploiting them! I know my price. There's a great deal of the whore in me, I'm sure. You have to be a bit whorish to be doing that kind of garbage for money. But if you're going to be a whore, I figure you should at least be a high-class whore. I'm nobody's whore for scale! But this all gets back to what I said a minute ago about working for a

One of Rick's numerous commercials—Nestle's Quik Shake Commercial (top). Rick was featured with Bob Beecher in *Tchin Tchin* at the Horseshoe Theatre in 1966 (2nd). In 1968 on CBS Playhouse Rick starred in *Saturday Adoption* (3rd). Rick starred as a soldier in Bruce Goldsmith's student film *Buddies* (bottom).

percentage. I would rather do something I consider worthwhile, and take a chance on getting a percentage, than do some piece of crap that massages the mind to sleep, no matter what my price. That means, in a sense, that we're all producing the film. If it fails, I fail with them. And why shouldn't I? If it fails, it's my fault. As the lead in a film, I'm as responsible for the success or failure of the film as anybody. So I feel like I should be in there taking my chances. I'm in there taking the beating, and I'm in there getting the rewards. I think they'd get better performances out of actors if they made it a kind of cooperative effort. I really do."

Naturally, the conversation eventually drifted around to *So Long, Blue Boy*, and Rick revealed that he almost didn't get the part of the male lead in that film, even though he had been fully aware of the project from its inception. He was working with Jerry Gordon, teaching a teenage acting workshop class, when Gordon was contracted to direct the film by producer Kenneth Sprague, who is well known in gay movie circles as the model, Dakota. Gordon told Rick about the project, and kept him informed as the script progressed. One reason that Rick was not at first interested in the film as a vehicle for himself is that it was first conceived to be a hardcore gay porno film. Gordon had never directed a movie—his background is as an actor and stage director—and he looked on it as an opportunity to learn the basics of filmmaking by working at them, no matter what the content of the film.

But as the script began to develop and expand, he began to aspire to higher things for his film directing debut. As Rick tells the story, "Jerry started working on the script with the writers, and he started getting ideas about the characters and their relationships, and the more he worked on it, the more meat he put into it."

"Unfortunate choice of words," I commented. He grinned.

"Yeah, and he took some of the meat out of it, too!" he amended. "Anyway, he kept working on the script, and the whole thing just kept growing, until pretty soon he no longer had a porno film, but a fairly ambitious production on his hands. Then he got into casting it. But still he never thought

of me for the lead. He wanted a jaded sort of pretty-boy type in it. It was my agent who came up with the idea. He knew Jerry, and knew about the film. And then one night he happened to see *Brother Sun Sister Moon*, and suddenly, seeing Graham Faulkner's characterization in that, he realized that I was the sort of person it would take to make Jerry's character work—a certain kind of freshness, almost an innocence, instead of jaded sophistication."

Finally, although Gordon already had the part cast with another actor, he agreed to hear Rick read for it. Jerry Gordon admitted to me that he frankly had hoped that Rick would be bad, because Gordon, with a long background in traditional theatre and technical acting technique, was not happy at the thought of working professionally with Rick, whose acting technique has been thoughtfully derived from the "method" approach. However, Rick walked in, picked up a script, and gave such a brilliant reading that Gordon, with decidedly mixed emotions, cast him on the spot.

For those who are among the legions who did not see *So Long, Blue Boy*, the story briefly concerns a young art student, Isaiah Jenkinson (Rick), and his middle-aged art teacher, Ed Rilke (Arthur Franz). The two have been lovers, but Isaiah wants to call that portion of their relationship off, and he goes off to a cabin near a tiny mountain village to work and be alone. The professor, however, pursues him to the village and rents another cabin, rumored among the locals to be haunted. The cabin's curse is personified by Blue Boy, an ominous Great Dane which frequents the cabin and "adopts" its occupants. Isaiah, meanwhile, has met a local teenager, Dean (Richard Rowley), a beautiful young blond whom he hires to model for a sculpture. Slowly, Isaiah finds himself falling in love with Dean. The professor, in a fit of jealousy, attempts to destroy Isaiah's sculpture, and in an ensuing argument at the professor's cabin,

Director Gerald Gordon (back to camera) lays out a scene with Richard Rowley and Rick near the beginning of *So Long Blue Boy* (top). Rick tells Niele Adams not to interfere with his life (2nd). When Pamela Collins tries to seduce Rick, he calls his bluff and frightens her off (3rd). In the climatic scene of *So Long Blue Boy* artist and model (Rick and Richard Rowley) go for a swim and Rick is driven to seduce the boy (4th and bottom).





Isaiah knocks him against the stone fireplace, accidentally killing him. The locals, however, blame the death on the cabin's curse, and Isaiah goes back to his work, unsuspected. Soon the haunted cabin is rented again, this time to Julie (Nelle Adams), a thirtyish spinster, who quickly also finds herself attracted to young Dean. Feeling pressured by the competition, Isaiah unwisely pushes his affection on Dean in a highly erotic nude love scene. Dean at first responds tentatively, then is repulsed by the idea. Isaiah, crushed, runs off to the haunted cabin, where he is attacked by Blue Boy, falls, and dies in the same manner as the professor.

The complaints of the Gay Media Task Force, and of *Advocate* film critic Harold Fabbanks, who panned the film unmercifully, concerned the characters of Isaiah and the professor. Both are wretched, unhappy men whose unhappiness seems to stem directly from their homosexuality. The professor thrusts himself unfeeling upon the unresponsive Isaiah, who subsequently, in an intentional parallel, thrusts himself upon Dean. On the surface, the film is an unsavory story of perverted sex-

ual passions leading to misery, violence, and death. And yet both Jerry Gordon and Rick were taken aback at the vehemence of the gay community's revulsion to the film. The problem is largely one of perspective. The gay community looked upon the characters as two more representatives of the standard movie homosexual stereotype of the miserable, unfulfilled pervert, which, when viewed objectively, they were. But as an actor and one largely unfamiliar with the social prejudice suffered by most Gays, Rick dug deeply into the character of Isaiah the man, and looked on him at all times as simply a tormented individual who happened to be gay, never as a symbol of all of homosexuality.

"Isaiah was certainly not a conventional hero," explained Rick in describing his approach to the character, "but how many conventional heroes have you got running around today, and how interesting are they, anyway? I feel like Isaiah was really brilliant, but he despised himself because he knew he wasn't really taking his best shot. Taking a chance on being really great. That's what that whole conflict with the professor was about. The professor would be brutally honest with him and say, 'Look, you're good, but you could be really great, if you just worked.' But Isaiah just didn't want to strain. If things didn't go his way, he'd just give it up and run off and fuck somebody, male or female. It didn't really matter to him, because it was himself he was satisfying, not his partner. I'm sure he was aware of this shallowness in himself, and he hated himself for it. There's a lot of Isaiah in me, really. I tend to take the easiest way out of something. I'm trying to overcome it, but of course that's easy to say and hard to do. It takes a lot of time, and a lot of work. And a constant struggle not to fool yourself. And not to bail out on somebody else, and say, 'The whole thing is fucked.' To stop and say, 'Wait a minute! Maybe I'm fucked, in the way I'm looking at it.'"

I reminded Rick that one of the gay community's objections to the film was in the callous way both characters tried to push themselves onto others who were obviously not interested in the attention.

"Oh, my God, that's such a limited way of looking at it, though!" he argued. "Regardless of his sexual persua-

sion, if a person wants somebody, he's going to try. You see, Dean seemed willing to Isaiah. He seemed willing and free enough. Isaiah didn't see it as pushing himself. It just seemed to happen. And if it hadn't been for Dean's conditioning, it would have happened, and it would have been beautiful. Remember Dean kissed Isaiah back. He was ready. It was just the fears and the conditioning that repulsed him. And the same with the professor. They had been lovers, remember. He wasn't pushing himself anymore than anyone who has been in love and wants to continue the relationship with somebody who's getting scared because it's getting too heavy. I mean, the person's going to say, 'Hey, wait a minute! Don't you understand? I love you!'

An obvious question presents itself, and I took this opportunity to ask it. "Have you, yourself, had any homosexual experiences, good, bad, or indifferent?"

"None," Rick answered good-naturedly. "That scene in the film with Richard was the first time I'd ever even kissed another man on the lips. Although there was one time when I got

pretty upset by a homosexual. It was several years ago, when I was working in community theatre. This was down in the South Bay, but there was this group of Gays that worked with us, all of whom lived up in the Silverlake area."

"Oh," I murmured. "The Swiss Alps."

Rick cracked up. "God! Is that what I'm called? Anyway, I went up to a party there with some of the other kids from the theatre... you know, some of the straight kids pretty much my own age. And it turned out to be a gay party. And there was this one particular guy there... he had come on to me before, and he was hitting on me pretty strong at the party. Gropping me, and playing up to me. I can handle that sort of thing, although it really was beginning to annoy me a little. But then, I guess he was getting drunk, or something, and he started getting very ugly, and he said something to the effect that sooner or later they'd get me. And that really upset me. Viciousness upsets me immensely. And that whole sort of viciousness... saying, 'Well, you may not know who you are, but sooner or later we'll get you.' That has nothing to do



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with love, or with sensuality, or friendship, or anything."

"But isn't that just the sort of behavior you were just excusing in the characters in *Blue Boy*?"

"No, I don't think so at all. As I said before, Isaiah and the professor had been lovers—they still were to some extent. So the professor wasn't imposing on Isaiah against his will. He was just trying to hang on to the tattered remnants of what had probably once been a beautiful relationship. And the same thing with Dean. Isaiah did get signals from him. He was interested. He did respond. But at the last minute, all his old training and conditioning took over and ruined the whole thing. But none of them were like this poor dumb bastard at the party who couldn't seem to do any better than going around groping somebody who was clearly not interested in the whole scene. Obviously, this was just one individual, and he wasn't a typical homosexual, and just as obviously, this whole kind of attitude is not limited to any particular sexual persuasion. Heteros can be the same way. There was this one guy talking to a girl of mine once . . . he was a real pig. It amazes me how small some people can be. They don't really like women. Their partner is just a thing to be used. And I'm sure that whatever sex these people have has to be based on degradation defiling the partner."

I asked Rick if he hadn't approached *Blue Boy* with some trepidation. He was playing a homosexual character, although he is himself straight, he had several major nude scenes; and he had a love scene with another male which I would surely rank among the most erotic love scenes ever filmed. Was any of this cause for concern for him?

"Oh, sure. I'd be lying if I said I wasn't worried about it. But I wasn't worried about it in the way you might think. Playing a homosexual, for instance. To me, he was a human being first, and a homosexual second, so that didn't bother me at all. Nor was I concerned that some people would automatically assume that I must be gay because of the character I was playing. I don't care if someone thinks I'm gay. That's their hang-up, not mine. Mainly, I just didn't want to get typed. Hollywood has a tremendous tendency to type-cast an actor, and since this was



my biggest part in four or five years, I didn't want anybody saying, 'Oh, so old Gates has gone gay on us, huh? Well, we'll call him if we ever get any gay parts.'

"As for the nudity, that didn't really bother me either, as long as it was an important part of the scene. But there were a couple of times . . . like the first day of shooting. The first scene we shot was one where I was sacked out on the sofa when Pam Collins, who was playing a girl from the village, comes in and we do a whole scene that involves me getting out of bed, bare-assed. And while we were shooting, it was obvious to me that they were just trying to get as many shots of my ass as possible. All that had nothing to do with the circumstances of the scene.

"And remember, this is my first day on the set, knowing that the producer had originally wanted to make this a pornographic film. He had just gone along with the changes. I had no idea where his head was at. I didn't know how much control Jerry had, and frankly, I didn't know just where Jerry was coming from, either. I knew that they

Continued on Page 72





fashion california

by Bill Arseneaux
photography by Dave Sands

casual



The Southern California lifestyle, in clothing, is a unique U.S. phenomenon. And also one that is seasonally duplicated in many major cities under the label "sportswear." It's comfortable and casual—both to wear and to see. How it evolved is up for guessing. I venture equal parts geography and transient's philosophy. There are few absolute traditions about Southern California except, maybe, nuts, citrus and "tinseltown" itself. The resultant "look" is much like the June wedding jingle: "Something old, something new, something borrowed . . ." You know the rest.

With the recent advent of the male "peacock" era, even our local major corporations found acceptance of the turn-of-the-century shirt and wider than the two-inch tie. The soft revolution often proved that comfortable employees were happy employees; were better than non-comfortable employees, or no employees.

The practicality of casual wear cannot be doubted, and because of our local way of life, I must add, without regard to the occasion. Besides, there are the same reasonable prerequisites for a casual "with-it" look, as required for a grey suit and tie.

For June, IN TOUCH presents an approach which is both visual and comfortable—sane, and slightly . . . well, bigger than sane. Most all the items are in the above-average price range, but to look is to observe their versatility. Doubling up in functional uses is a Southern California "must." Aware that today's freedoms make it more apparent that most designers are basically at odds in social orientation to the consuming public, and I may add, generally unequal in emotional sensitivities, we have picked "classic" standards.

And for that "to-hell-with-tomorrow" pacesetter, we have enjoyed finding some one-of-a-kind items. There are no "fads" for this summer, unless the Great Gatsby wore denim!

It does seem reasonable to think that the "tinseltown" indifference, or freedom, has evolved a dress code which reflects the Southern California surroundings. And besides, what our "visually" oriented community may lack in long-range charm, orange juice and sunshine supplements handsomely.

Page 22, top

Southern California street scene: Rick does a second take topped by a Larry Kane pullover in Italian wool with red/green trim (Ah Men). Chris is in Ah Men's blue "faded" cord suit by Edwin Scott/Canada. Tony makes his point in white on white resewn, embroidered ducks and sport-sleeved "Space-Ball" jacket (all by Michel).

Page 22, bottom

Italian all nylon Nik-Nik shirts may not please everyone—but those they please will be hard-pressed to choose just one of these backs. Pastel slax in "linen" polyester by Dunlee (all from Ah Men).



Above

Tony stops time in a soft and rib-fitted "von Furstenberg" acrylic pullover and original "Hobo" walkers with patch-pocket hips. A very light cotton bush-jacket from Spain tops all (Ah Men).

Above right

"Cooling It" in the lightest of looseness... Tony in a sophisticated swirl "tent" of brown/black nylon (Ah Men). Chris relaxes in Rudi Guernreich's caftan of original mint-green to white polyester fabric (Ports-of-Call). Confident in the "lava-lava" knot, Rick stands by in his 4'x5' crepe square... sheer comfort... do it yourself-er.

Right

Chris waits tansorial attentions while Rick decides in a white wool/polyester suit—patched pocket-flaps and elbows in white leather/Aaron James/San Francisco (Ah Men).





Left

Class waits best . . . Tony is topped with Larry Kane's Italian vest and shirt-laped cardigan in red and green trim on lightweight wool. Rick has nothing on his mind, and Chris cannot help but relax in Gino Paoli's matched acrylic black and white set. (All from Ah Men.)

Below

Looking "hotter" than the stove is Tony in a zany pineapple-studded bib of second-skin re-patched denim overalls. This ultimate one-of-a-kind with unbuttoned fly-front flares is named "Bowie-After Dark" by Michel

Below left

Rick in "trippy" walkers by Ah Men and only a Gino Paoli cardigan with black trim on white light wool. Tony falls into his mind out of the looking glass.



Page 25, top

Michel clothes all . . . Tony leans into a re-patched denim set of "same" fabric for that matched look Lurex T-shirt with scooped neck and three-quarter sleeves in shimmering black/gold. Chris in a "musketeer" shirt of cut black silk voile. Rick collared, flared and well-suited to "Chelsea Boy" in Italian brown plaid wool.

Page 25, bottom

Rudi Guernreich has ingeniously arranged twelve antique Indian mirror-cloths to caftan Chris royally. Exclusively for West Hollywood's Ports-of-Call.

So ... put on a soft color leave your shirt and socks at home ... stroll—hands into pockets ... sparkle—sunshades on the hair ... and, Welcome to the Southern California lifestyle—Summer of '74.

Our main contributor this month is Ah Men, truly a complete men's shop for rain or shine, head to toe and even stem to stern, clothing. Established twelve years ago, Don Cook's enterprise has consistently redefined casual men's wear with fitted comfort, as well as with visual excitement, in mind.

Aran Taylor, vice-prez and buyer, was a pleasure to work with. Unfortunately, he is not in the new '74 Spring/Summer Catalog which is available for 50¢ at the main store: Ah Men, 8900 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood, Calif. 90069. Their 40% reduced "Clothes-Out" shop across the street is for the walk-in trade.

Recently, a franchise has been opened in Houston, Texas. All belts, "Tropical" sunglasses and caftan jewelry used in this layout are from Ah Men.

Ports-Of-Call, 8445 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood, Calif. 90069, is managed by young and vibrant Mike Kreiss. Mike's business neighbor is Rudi Guernreich's studio. It was just a natural for the two to collaborate. Results ... this exclusive line of antique, mirrored, Indian-fabric caftans, plus other Rudi designs available in the \$100 range.

Our second biggest contributor this month is 24-year-old Michel Laurent Durvenay. When Michel was not drawing (a portrait of Mrs. Robt. Altman), or designing (a rock-star look for Capt. Beefhart), he was restitching denims for this month's layout. Born and raised by the French-Mediterranean, Michel studied in Rome, Berlin, London and Paris, where in 1966 he couped the first prize at the Ecole Nationale des Beaux Arts. After shooting this layout at "8327," they agreed to be the local outlet for Michel and now his ready-to-wear and drawings are available. However, more personalized styling is available at his studio—1637 N. Sierra Bonita Ave., Los Angeles, Calif. 90046, 213/851 1406.

Our last contributor is the Creole Boutique, New Orleans Square, 8543 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood, Calif. 90069, 213/652-3733. Open daily, noon to six. A year and a half old, it is a labor child of owner and designer





Above left

Chris is certainly not one of a series in this easy Safari suit of dress-up brushed chamois. Self-belted, in beige with lots of patch pockets (Ah Men).

Above right

Rick rides out in "The Tucson," a suit of brushed blue denim with just enough Thunderbird and rain clouds embroidered on the shoulder yoke. Dark blue piping trim on pant pockets and back yoke. Light Italian wool top in earth/green "they went thataway" stripes (Ah Men).

Larry Rosen. Re-batch, leather and rhinestones are his trade. Jackets range from \$50 to \$1000, pants from \$15 to \$300. Doc Severenson, Liberace and the First Edition got "glitz" from Larry.

Our head-reeling location this month is "8327" and is located at 8327 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood, Calif. 90069. For two years their changing selections have intrigued and maintained a growing clientele. The unusual, and definitely ... the unique in antiques, gifts, accessories, plants and handcrafted items abound. Even the vintage display fixtures are for sale. Old neon to "new" for those with a sense of humor. A six-foot wooden "Modess" display wall unit has been converted into a coffee bar and the coffee klatch is daily. Black "mouches" from Paris (\$2.50) to a seven-foot Swiss cheese press (\$1200) You-have-to-see-it sort of place. Your friendly hosts are Don Gould and Joe Mahaffey. Daily to seven.

A good model is one who works as well as he looks, and this month we

were pleased by the gods—three times.

RICK is 28, German and English, and works the day away in the import distribution whirl. Leaving the Midwest he has impressed Acapulco, Hawaii, New England and now us. Horseback riding, ice-skating, water-skiing (an upcoming IN TOUCH feature with Rick) and modern jazz dancing keeps him in a sound and solid shape.

CHRIS is 22, a Michigan State grad in computer sciences and works locally for a major computer firm. As a waiter in the Valley on weekends, he stays trim by dodging dancers. Hungarian and German, Chris is a walking reference of sci-fi writing. A personable, intent and polite person to know.

TONY is 21 and of German and American Indian descent. Some four years from Arizona, Tony "sculpts" hair by day, bartends at night and then often works on his short stories. A conversation with Tony is a joy in the English communication art ... as well as in body languages. Bicycling keeps his six-foot frame lean.

Jackets ... say it all!!! Rick sits under the weight of an exclusive in "Fire" ... pearls, paste, rhinestones and jets. Owned and created by Larry Rosen of Creole Boutique and valued at \$700. Tony strides out in authentic Navajo weave—smocked high at the waist with Italian black velour tube sleeves (Michel). Chris waits handsomely in antique handmade "chenille" rug pieces from Berlin. "Stag" is sleeved in those easy

velour tubes and there are trousers to match (Michel).





community leader

OLIVER & IERARDI

THE ORIGINAL ORIGINALS

by Hugh Roberts
with photography by the author



Exactly when does an art form realize it's an art form? Mostly, far too late I fear to rescue its beginnings for later re-enjoyment by those not lucky enough to have been around to catch its start. Once in a great while someone—usually an interested outsider or avid collector—manages to rescue the early remnants of an entire artistic concept from oblivion. Two such men, Richard Oliver and John Ierardi, have single-handedly . . . or, rather, double-handedly in this case, done just that. These two canny men are the ones who produced that brilliant series of albums, "Those Glorious MGM Musicals," neatly giving us a double save. Not only are some marvelous moviegoing memories captured here for us to relish forever, but also a delightful supply of early, long out-of-print recordings, featuring a whole galaxy of great stars and writers.

Unlike most of their fellow rescuers, John and Richard are both very much involved in one of the fields where the salvage work was done, the recording industry. Mr. Oliver, a native Californian, has been working in records for many years as an annotator, the fellow who writes the liner notes on album covers. He's currently writing for Stanyan Records. This writing has won him several Grammy nominations. Dick isn't just limited to liner notes, though, he's the author of one book on Broadway musicals, is working on another covering movie musicals, and has just finished his first novel, a serious look at city life that is soon to be published. I'm betting this talented and gifted man will soon find a Pulitzer Prize waiting close at hand to join his covey of other awards.

John Ierardi is currently in charge of the tape section at United Artists Records that covers foreign recordings. He started to work for the company several years ago in their regional office in Boston, where he was born and raised. John's truly an expert on tape and has been for years, long before they gained such wide popularity. When that tape market opened up and came bursting in on the record market a few short years ago, the company quickly took advantage of his knowledge and promoted him, bringing John to its home office, here on the West Coast.

The reason these two men met in the first place is a simple one: Vera Lynn. Dick Oliver was writing the liner notes for her Stanyan LP and needed some photos and background information on her. A mutual friend suggested he contact John Ierardi at United Artists, who was not only a Lynn fan but a great collector of memorabilia and trivia covering a great many other esoteric stars. They quickly discovered a common bond. They were both unsquelchable, dyed-in-the-wool fans. Most other people discovering such mutual interest in old stars and old

movies, with a strong emphasis on musicals, might just be content to take in a few revivals at the Encore Theatre and even, perhaps, dream a few dreams—"Wouldn't it be great if . . ." or, "Say, why don't we . . ."—and let it go at that. Not so with these two go-getters. First, they hit on a really grand scheme, renting one of the old-style movie palaces in Hollywood, leasing some of the great, old film musicals and showing them. True, this turned out to be a bit unworkable, for them anyway. It's an idea they still feel is worth pursuing and haven't given it up, quite yet.

Those earlier plans soon filtered down to the field they both knew, understood, were involved in and could really do something about, converting at least a part of their dream to the reality of vinyl. They drew up a long, detailed letter of proposal to present to MGM Records. This was really taking a chance, as Dick Oliver told me.

"They were really very nice to us. That letter was in no way binding. They could have thanked us for the idea, sent us on our way and reissued the LP package themselves."

Fortunately that didn't happen. The company liked the idea and gave Dick and John carte blanche. The great surge of exultation of accomplishment was short-lived when suddenly the men were struck with the tremendousness of the monumental task they'd undertaken. They'd been involved in records for a long time, but neither of them had ever produced. They were both aware that it was this very production of a record that could give it the sound, literally turning it into a hit. What they did have were ideas, lots of ideas. They had decided, long since, to do it right. It was all planned from the buyer's point of view, since that's exactly what they, themselves, were, buyers and collectors. They realized a simple reissue just wouldn't do. Many of the more popular scores had been reissued before, some even on the company's budget line, Metro. What there had never been was an all-out frontal attack on the buying public, pushing the value of these records as history . . . not only as records, but as music, stars and film as well. That became the sales plan.

Their own catch phrase to describe the undertaking is "original originals, all the way!" John was automatically in charge of locating the tapes and then pulling them all together into a unit. Dick drew the task of doing all the research, including locating the stills from the films, and, of course, doing the liner notes. They wanted the entire package to be as authentic as possible. They even held out for the original Leo the Lion who's seen on the cover. His cousin, a latecomer with a short haircut, just wouldn't do. After a lot of concentrated looking, they finally managed to locate a copy, buried in the back of a file at MGM

Studios. There was also a long, hard search for one particular still of the ballet sequence from *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*. It is considered a high-water mark in film dance. It wasn't enough that the song was in the LP. They finally found it through a collector in England. There was also the determination to include a picture of Jean Hagen on the *Singing in the Rain* package. She doesn't appear on the record, as she has no songs in the film, but she was a very important part of it and received an Oscar nomination for her work. Having her present on the cover is one, small example of the care that was taken. The rarest still is probably the one of Carmen Miranda from *Nancy Goes to Rio* (by the way, this is her only available recording in this country). The two most popular photographs on the albums are the cheerleader number featuring Debbie Reynolds in *I Love Melvin* and, naturally, "Get Happy" from *Summer Stock* with Judy Garland. All the collected stills are being donated to the library of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Oliver's notes were as exhaustive and informative as finding the art was. It is indeed a real contribution to film and record history.

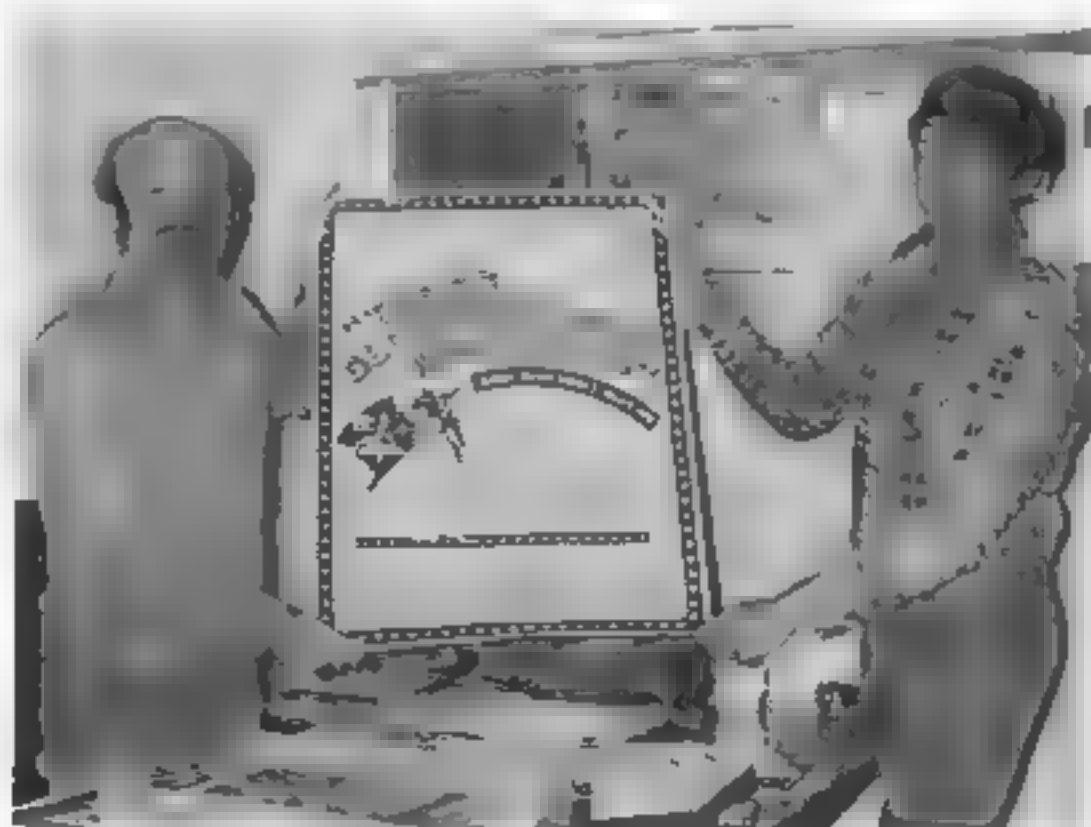
Lerardi's search for the tapes was just as difficult. Some were in very bad shape, having long since been deleted from the active record catalogue and not cared for properly. *Hit the Deck*, *Pagan Love Song*, and *Rich, Young and Pretty* presented the most problems. John and Dick knew there were songs and musical numbers in many of the original films which were not included on the cast records. At first, they tried to use all the songs and numbers from the films that hadn't been included before on their reissues. They were coldly informed this would mean paying not only the stars for reuse but the entire MGM studio orchestra of the day. This, of course, made the cost prohibitive. They, instead, put their trivia-heads together and, collectively, came up with an alternative. John recalled several songs and dances had been later released from the original tracks and as singles on other albums when there wasn't room for them on the original album. With a lot of work, searching through an almost endless number of LP's, they managed to come up with a good many authentic fill-ins, the two most notable being the Christmas song Judy Garland does in *In the Good Old Summertime* and the great, memorable instrumental from *Words and Music*, "Slaughter on 10th Avenue."

The first real shock they laid on the record company was

that they wanted none of this phony "re-recorded-for-stereo" thing. It was the only point where they met any major resistance. In desperation, to keep the sound true and clean, John and Richard had two versions of one of the albums recorded on a master, the first in original hi-fidelity monaural and the second in rechanneled stereo. The difference in quality was amazing. Even those important record company executives had to agree, the mono was far superior to the artificial stereo, so that's how they were released.

Dick and John had both realized from the beginning of the project that large corporations operate, out of necessity, on the basic premise of making money. After all, that's why they're in business, even though they may be involved in the arts. Without profits to keep operating there will be no further product—therefore, no art. Since both men were involved in such an industry, the problems they did meet on the project came as no surprise to them. They know that space just can't be devoted to a collection of old stills and old tapes, much less pay someone to take care of them. True, that's a very sad outlook by big business, but it does exist. Perhaps this experience with Dick and John will help to change that businesslike concept a little . . . any small change could be of value—at least until some properly equipped agency is formed to preserve and care for these bits of artistic history. The sales of the LP's themselves proved that business should look into caring for and keeping its own. They sold very well! The albums took off like a shot. It's the only time in record history an entire series of LP's of this number have been on the "Hot Hundred" record charts all at the same time. The line's biggest seller to date has been the *Singing in the Rain/Easter Parade* package, featuring four of the lot's biggest stars, Judy Garland, Fred Astaire, Gene Kelly and Debbie Reynolds, plus capturing forever the classic film musical of all time with "Rain," as well as giving us some of the best songs by "Parade's" legendary composer, Irving Berlin. Suddenly, these two outsiders who worked for other labels became MGM's fair-haired boys. They quickly received the go sign to produce a second set of six LP's. This new set, just as carefully, thoroughly researched as the first and with just as much work involved, was recently released and look to do as well as the first sets. Dick laughs and tells me that he and John got a bit more money for doing the later sets.

"We were cheap! Wait . . . that word sounds so . . . well . . .





cheap. Let's say . . . inexpensive!"

They feel sure that this is one of the major reasons they got to do the work themselves, in the first place. They offered their very considerable talents to the company at not very much money to do a great deal of work. Truly, when they did the first group of albums, it was all for love.

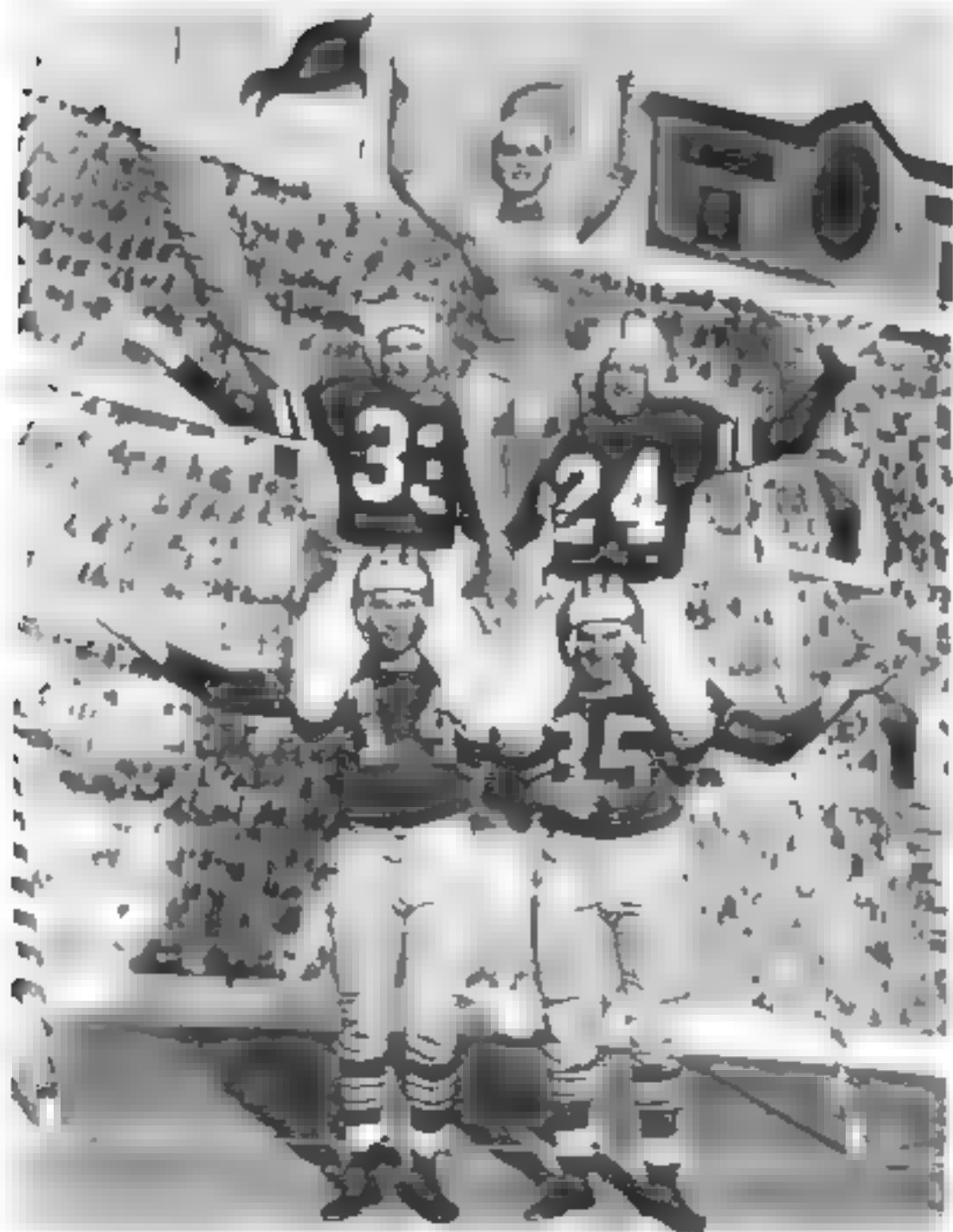
Was it worth it? You bet it was! I know it was for them and it is even more so for the buying public. The entire series, both releases, are good for hours of not just nostalgia but sheer entertainment. Look at the movies, *Singing in the Rain*, *Show Boat*, *Kiss Me Kate*, *Brigadoon*, *Silk Stockings*, *Les Girls*, *Summer Stock*, *Easter Parade*, plus many, many more, all those stars—Debbie Reynolds, Jane Powell (currently the most in demand), Judy Garland (still the best seller), Fred Astaire (one set contains his only recorded appearance with Ginger Rogers), of course Howard Keel and Kathryn Grayson, and everyone else in the MGM stock company right up to and including Esther Williams, the great composers Kern, Friml, Hammerstein, Mercer, Gershwin, Lerner and Loewe, Rodgers and Hart, and just about

everyone else who ever jotted a note on a blank page in Hollywood. It's all here just waiting to be enjoyed.

Both Dick and John still seem to be a little in awe of their success. They've become friendly with several of their recorded stars and have even achieved the status of dem-personalities in their own right. They were recently the guests of honor at an Ann Miller retrospective. This awe with success has in no way interfered with their future plans, though. If the new series on MGM goes as well as the first, they'll negotiate for still a third. This time they hope to try at least a couple of background scores from non-musicals. They even hope to be able to make some arrangement with the musicians' union—like a hefty contribution to the health, welfare and retirement fund—and secure a waiver/release for some of those never-before-on-record scores, in order to add those to our film/record history. That feel for nostalgia's best-sellers and those roving eyes of theirs have them digging into the catalogues of a couple of other record companies as well, to see what they can come up with this time.

The most important long-range plan is to produce a musical comedy revolving around this same era, here in Hollywood. Since it concerns Hollywood, they want to produce it here, premiering it with a real old-style Hollywood opening—stars, cars, and klieg lights—the works! They have the script (which Dick wrote), they have a star interested and they even plan to make use of the earlier planned Hollywood movie palace (where the film series was to be presented) for the run. The look in John's and Richard's eyes snaps out their excitement. It's a project our community should consider really getting behind, pushing and offering all the help we can. It just can't miss! Watching these two, it's like their whole lives have been planned with choreography by Busby Berkeley. What's really nice to know is that old-style Hollywood isn't dead. It's alive and well, burning brightly in the agile, productive minds of Richard Oliver and John Ierardi.





Judy Garland in the famous "Get Happy" scene from *Summer Stock* (top left). Carmen Miranda sings "Yipsee-I-O" in *Nancy Goes to Rio* (top right), and Debbie Reynolds as the football in "Saturday Afternoon Before the Game" from *I Love Melvin* (left) are three of the rare photos included in *Those Fabulous MGM Musicals* which Oliver & Lerardi produced. Richard and John were guests of honor at the recent Ann Miller retrospective in Hollywood (below).





rising star

Beautiful To Be WAYNE METCALF

by Thom Taylor
photography by Rik Lawrence

How beautiful to be beautiful, and what better place to be beautiful than in Hollywood, California—especially if you happen to be hot for the stage and celluloid of the entertainment world. . . .

Wayne Metcalf is almost all three. He is indeed one of the beautiful people, though he may be a private jet or two behind some of that crowd. He is close to the Hollywood scene: Santa Monica is home. (He prefers the sparkle of the ocean to the glitter of the Boulevard.) And he is getting hotter all the time! From a career that has run from cool to lukewarm, he is now beginning to feel the first bubbles of the big boiling.

On a sunny St. Patrick's Day with a deep blue sky to match the shamrock green of his lawn, Wayne ushered me into his beach apartment with a smile that would perk up any droll old cprechaun.

"Hi, babe. Come on in."

Beneath the kitchen window the neighbor's kids were squealing. "I just went outside and got pinched. I didn't have my green on." He smiled condescendingly and nodded toward the giggles.

Instead of green he wore a bright yellow shirt that bore on the back the title of that smash musical, *Don't Bother Me . . . I Can't Cope*, a phrase that was true enough for him at one time.

"Have you had breakfast yet?" Happily I hadn't. "I'm making pancakes. I make my own from scratch. I don't like those package things." He cooks with the flair of one who enjoys it. And the results were proof enough of that talent.

Breakfast over we sat before the fireplace in a cozy living room adorned with African sculpture, lounging sofas, and pigs. Not the real ones. Wayne's pigs are part of a collection he has had for years. Begun for him by a friend, he now has quite a variety that includes an enormous old hog printed on a bed sheet, a huge brown plaster pig under the bathroom sink, and cute little lady piglets with flowers in their hair.

The apartment, which he shares with a roommate and a poodle named Wolfie, is neat and bright with a large balcony overflowing with plants.

"I don't buy expensive plants. I get those 49-cent ones at the

market. They grow like crazy. I have a green thumb."

The house has a comfortable lived-in atmosphere which is perhaps surprising for someone whose roots have never really had a chance to grow anywhere.

He was born an Aquarius in Walla Walla, Washington. "It always reminds me of that bean commercial." And that is really as much as he knows about the place. His family moved when he was one. That was the first of many moves in the ensuing years.

With a father in the ministry, home was many places from Georgia to Oregon to South Africa and the Congo where he lived for four years before his family beat a hasty retreat with Wayne's life in jeopardy after his trained guard dog erroneously attacked a native.

Then followed eight years in New York City—his longest stop in one place. "I can't really say I'm from anywhere. I guess I could say I'm a New Yorker but not really. I started college there. I never went to public school until I went to college. Before that I always went to academics."

In New York he attended Hunter College. They were good years even though he chose the wrong campus.

"Hunter has two campuses, one in the Bronx and one on Park Avenue. When I made out the application, I copied down the wrong numbers and ended up at the Bronx campus. I tried everything I could think of to switch. I finally gave up. And I got to like it there. It has one of the nicest campuses of any college in the city."

He began as a freshman majoring in physical education and was a member of the varsity swim, track and football teams. His football career ended when a teammate—"He must have weighed three hundred pounds"—stepped on his hand with cleats. He got out of the P.E. field and into another love, theatre arts.

Typical of his ferocious drive, he graduated four years later from Hunter with two degrees, one in theatre arts and the other in German. For his major in German, he graduated with honors.

For the next four years he worked at Carnegie Hall, first as an usher and later backstage as an assistant to the performers.

"I got to meet everyone. They were great to work with." Except for one popular young folksy-love songstress. "And she was a real bitch." His green eyes snap.

"At that time I had lots of friends who were actors and models, but I wasn't into it at all. They would always be going to interviews and auditions, and they'd try to talk me into going with them. Most of them weren't really doing that well. Yet people would stop me on the street and ask me to show up somewhere for an audition."

Eventually he did and got his introduction into modeling and commercials. Work which led to his first film, *Death by Invitation*.

His laughter builds as he recalls, "I played a crazed shepherd boy who killed a witch. I had to drag around this stupid sheep who kept collapsing," his face reddening with laughter. "I also caught cold running around in knickers on Staten Island in the dead of winter."

His interest sparked, nonetheless, he began to work with Edward Albee's Playwrights Unit, appearing in several of their productions. But once again the Nomad spirit got to him and so did the weather.

"I was sick of the weather in New York. I didn't see that much happening in films, but it was the weather that did it. God!" he rolls onto his side laughing. "It rained for seven weeks before I left. The temperature was in the eighties, and my clothes were starting to mildew. We had an apartment with a huge roof garden, and my flowers were so big they were break-



ing off the stems."

With the New York climate oppressive and depressive, he moved south to Atlanta and began work for the Navy on a graduate research assistantship in psychology at Georgia Tech. The assistantship didn't pay well, and he supplemented his income with more modeling.

But his actor's blood yearned for satisfaction. He answered the "Call of the Studio" and moved to Los Angeles. At Cal State-L.A., he continued working on his Master's degree and began, at last, to get down to the business of show business appearing in *The Devil and Leroy Basset*, a Johnson-Pearson Production, that *Entertainment* magazine has called "the sleeper of the year," and Disney's *The World's Greatest Athlete* with Jan-Michael Vincent.

Wayne's excellent build caught countless eyes including those of the producers of Tom Egan's *The Dirtiest Show in Town* and he was off to Honolulu for the summer with that production.

"I guess the best I've felt about any work, the most rewarding, was the sense of freedom I had with *DSIT* in Hawaii. That was a good time for me. I felt good about my body and my craft and knowing that people were coming to the show just to see me. People would stop me on the street to invite me to dinner and to ask about the show. It was a good feeling."

Prior to that he had done some nude work for New York's Kenn Duncan and appeared in several of the Duncan books.

"The thing I don't like about Kenn's books is that you're given no credit. If you're into acting, it's obviously because you need mass attention and affection." He breaks with a laugh. "That's my problem. I need mass affection."

The laugh belies a very real need for deeper feelings than those sometimes available from the people the looks and the body attract.





In the course of this adventure in *The Devil and Leroy Bassett*, Cody Bearpaw (center) and Wayne end up in jail with an old redneck character (top). *The Kids* is a bright, young comedy group featuring Chris Jones, Wayne, Nikki Carlson, J.P. Jones (an August IT fashion model), Sharon White, and Tom Taylor (above—who wrote this article) (middle). *The Kids* again commenting on the foibles of youth while providing insight into maturity (bottom). All the photos on 35 are from the Hawaii Company of *Dirtiest Show in Town*. The entire company explores the possibility of body contact. Wayne is with J.P. Jones down front (top left). Wayne and Neola in a publicity shot (top right). And two promotion shots of Wayne (bottom left and right)

"A good body can really be a detriment in a sense that people assume you have nothing to say, that you're just a nice dumb hunk. I really had a problem for a while. In fact, I finally ended up going to a psychiatrist because people were always coming on to me—men and women alike—wanting to get into my pants. I began to feel like just a body, a piece of meat.

"I couldn't cope with it, but the psychiatrist helped me see that if that's how I affected people, I should accept it as a compliment when they came on to me. Of course, if they can't see anymore in me than just a body—if they don't look for something beyond that—well, they're the ones who have the problem."

And there are a lot of casting people who have that "problem." "You go in for an interview and they see that you have a pretty good build, and immediately they want you to do a nude scene. You may not even get a chance to read for anything else. I was cast in another show after I came back from Hawaii. I had to do some nudes in it also. I hated the show and finally one day I just decided, 'I don't need it.' I didn't go back for rehearsal. I called and told them to forget it.

"A good build should be part of the actor's equipment, not good actor or good body. I think having a good body should evidence self-discipline which is a great asset to a performer."

His own mental hassles and his desire to help others with theirs have brought him rather naturally to his work in psychology for which he recently received his Master's degree from Cal State-L.A.

"I've always been interested in psych. I like to manipulate people," he laughs. "Then, too, I wanted something extra to fall back on in case I don't make it, although I don't use that as an excuse. I don't even like to say it. I never go into anything that I don't think I can be successful in. . . . But I do like to help people, to create an awareness in them, to help them see when others are using them."

With the psychologist's eye, the actor's sensitivity, and his own very real need to serve and to be needed, he is always interested and involved and ready to "give a damn."

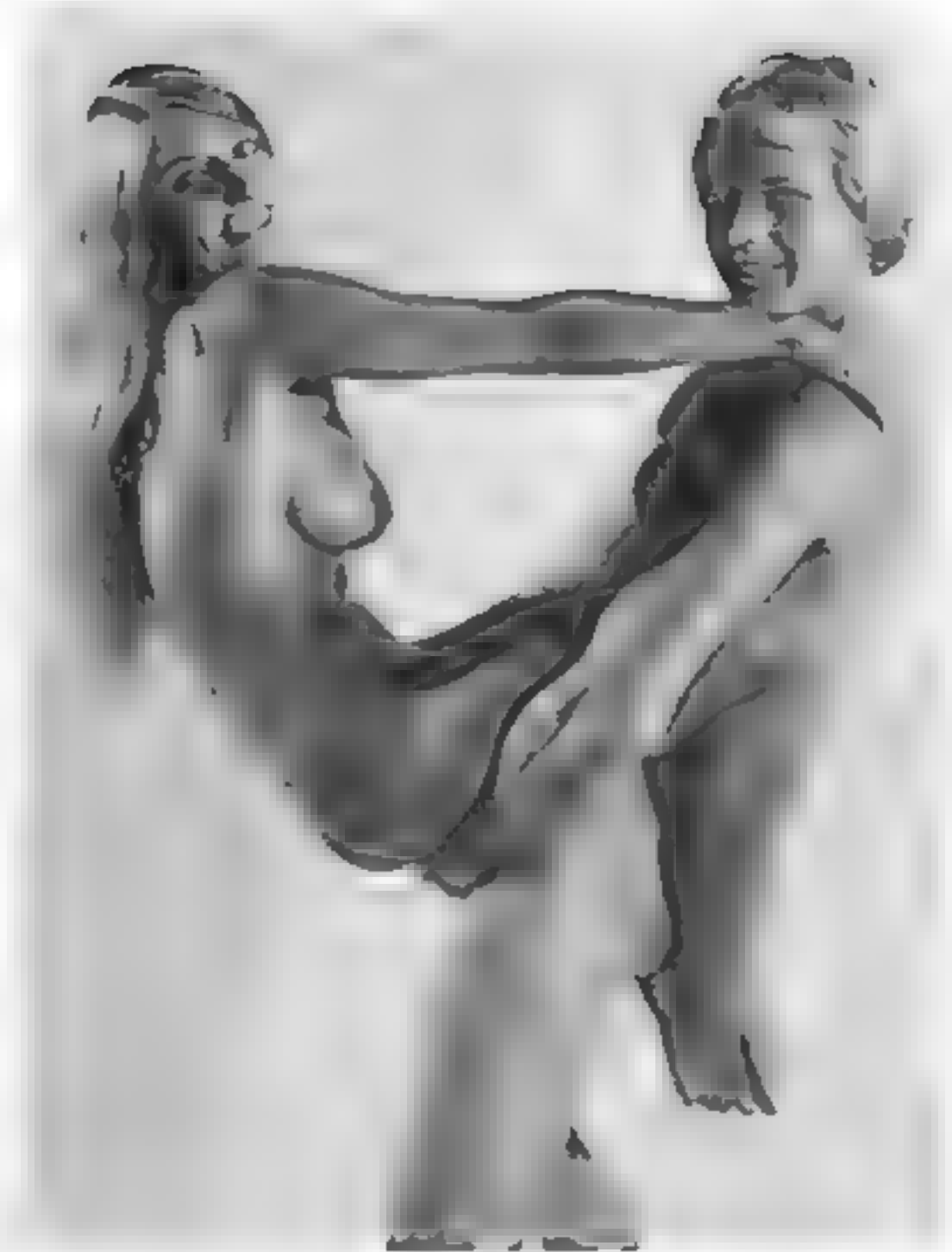
"I think it's a good sign that psychiatrists have come to the conclusion that being gay is a sexual disorientation rather than a sickness. I think gayness is a matter of what you're comfortable with, of what you fall into first. As long as sex—gay or straight—doesn't govern everything you do, you should be a rather healthy, stable person.

"As a minority group Gays suffer much the same type discriminations as the women, but I believe they are more aware of their problems in that area and most of them have the potential to rise above them."

He has become something of a godsend to the Women's Lib movement because of his concern for their discrimination. "I went to Oregon last year and helped end a strike of nurses who were not getting equivalent pay. One of the hospital commissioners had called them a bunch of broads and insinuated that they were only worthwhile on their backs.

"Anyhow, several men and I formed a group called Men for Women United. We sent the nurses a telegram citing our support and offering our assistance. We also sent a telegram to the commissioner. It really worked. The strike ended very shortly after that. I have a thank-you letter somewhere from the governor of Oregon.

"Now I'm getting involved in the women's division of the



Screen Actors Guild. I want to do some interviews with women in the industry who have really been motivational in the business."

Small wonder that Jane Fonda, that champion of causes, is one of his favorite people. "I love her. I'd really like to work in a film with her, but I think I'd be too much in awe of her. I'd probably freeze up. I'd like to work with Curtis Harrington also. I love the kind of movies he does. *Who Slew Auntie Roo?* was one of my favorite films. There's a lot of subtle psychology in his work. I admire Maximilian Schell also. I'd like to work with him in any capacity."

Wayne Metcalf is part of a new breed of actor. Not content to be just an actor, he continues to expand in a variety of fields.

"After all, Agnes Moorehead has her doctorate in English. Jennifer Jones works with mentally retarded children when she's not filming.

"I don't think you can just limit yourself to theatre, especially the way the business is today. There are such a small percentage of the actors and actresses in town that are actually living on their incomes from acting. Besides I couldn't confine myself to one field. There are too many other things that interest me."

That is why he continues to work toward his doctorate in psychology at UCLA though his theatrical career is rapidly taking on greater proportions. This year he signed with IFA, the cream of the crop of theatrical agencies.

His fresh teenage appearance—he's twenty-five—has made him a natural choice for soft drink commercials, recruiting ads,





and health food products. He is soon to be featured on the box of the nation's leading brand of breakfast cereal. He has recently completed filming for a new horror film *Flesh of Frankenstein* and is about to begin another project.

At a time when many actors can't get an interview, this blond is having trouble fitting them all in. Granted, it may not be stardom . . . not yet, but at least, he's working. And in this town at this time, that's something.

Perhaps because he is such a mixture of people all rolled into one, the market for him is greater. He has the class and charm and sophistication of the experienced traveler, the person who knows something about the world, blended with the frivolity of youth. And he has a touch of cynicism blanketed by hope for



the future.

Like most performers he needs to be needed, but as the need is required uncertainties crop up. Is this what I really want to do? Is this the way I want to do it? Will the Impression be right?

As one Los Angeles critic has said, "Wayne Metcalf . . . class. He is a quality person. He embodies the look of American youth and vitality with the sensuous appeal of blooming manhood."

He is indeed a beautiful enigma, but one piece of the puzzle is firmly in place. Wayne Metcalf is an artist whose talents and drive are sure to carry him as high as he wants to go. With a body that is strong and a realness that is touchingly sincere, he is living proof that beauty is not always only skin-deep.



COMING OUT ON BROADWAY

by Neal Weaver

It's rather disconcerting to discover that seven shows have opened in the past three months or so, all dealing with one or another aspect of homosexuality or the gay scene. And that's only counting the legit stuff (i.e., exclusive of the porn films, strip shows, drag shows, etc.). What's even more exciting is that several of them are pretty good, and at least two are extraordinary.

Of the seven shows, I missed two. *Sextet* was a musical which received lukewarm to chilly reviews from the major critics, and expired before I could get to it. Reportedly one of its three pairs of lovers was gay. *Total Eclipse*, by Christopher Hampton, which played a limited run at the Chelsea Theatre Center in Brooklyn, dealt with the tortured love affair between French poets Arthur Rimbaud and Paul Verlaine. Reports suggest that it was a serious effort, well-produced and worthy, without being entirely successful. (Richard Watts, critic of the *New York Post*, who tends to turn into a hysterical old nanny-goat when confronted with any straightforward treatment of homosexuality, complained bitterly because the play

dealt with the sordid personal lives of the poets rather than their wonderful verses—and he was also distressed because the two famous poets were seen in bed together.)

Tom Eyan's *2008½*, with a limited run at the Truck and Warehouse Theatre, was one of the losers. Advance word of mouth suggested that it was to be a gay musical. Overtly it was not, though it did have a fantasy sequence in which some future president of the United States addressed the nation live from the Club Baths, and included a character named Superdike. It had an undertone, however, of a neurotic anti-female bias, and a castrating, put-downy approach to everything that one recognizes as springing from a certain kind of homosexual insecurity. The title suggests Mr. Eyan (creator of *The Dirtiest Show in Town*) aimed for a blend of science-fiction and Fellini. What he achieved was rather less than that: a witless futuristic saga about a Wonder Woman figure (Madelein Laroux) called Super-Cunt, and her female sidekick, Super-Suck. Super-Cunt's secret weapon is an exploding vagina that destroys any man rash enough to at-

tempt sexual intercourse with her. 'Nuff said? (All in all, it seemed a nasty little *pastiche* that might provide a field day for a Freudian analyst, but offered considerably less for the ordinary spectator.)

Earl Wilson, Jr.'s, *Let My People Come* is a bit better. It is not so much gay as pansexual. Mr. Wilson has parlayed his name, a generous serving of nudity, and extensive publicity into a hit, though the show has never officially opened. One suspects it may never open. After all, why risk bad notices when you're already selling out at the box office?

Let My People Come has a number of assets. One of them is a young man named Alan Evans who seems to derive the profoundest enjoyment from taking off his clothes. He goes about it with such a sunny, exuberant enthusiasm that it would be a shame not to enjoy it as much as he does. The show does not make large demands on his talents, but he is pleasant to look at, and he does what he is called upon to do quite agreeably. There is also a redheaded pixie named Christine Anderson who com-



bines a Rubensesque robustness with a Botticelli delicacy, and expresses, in a number called "Linda, Georgina and Me," her ambition to be a star of the porn flicks. In the timeworn style of the backstage musical, she, the lowly script girl, does get her chance to go on when the leading lady breaks a tooth while coupling with the above-mentioned Mr. Evans. Marty Duffy and Joe Jones are effective in a duet called "I'm Gay," in which two boys attempt to explain things to their respective parents. Larry Paul ette sings a pleasant but sentimental song called "Take Me Home With You" to the handsome stranger in a gay bar (Alan Evans again). The other performers are not without ability and charm, but unlike most really good intimate revues, the show doesn't really let us get to know them (and shafts of deep-loned mood lighting further obscure individual personalities. A girl named Tobie Columbus does emerge from the shadows with the unenviable task of delivering a number called "Come in My Mouth").

On the negative side, the show has a determined and persistent vulgarity of the sort that appeals mainly to those who still get a wicked thrill out of saying S-H-I-T to their M-O-T-H-E-R-S. One comedy sketch involves a college course called "Fellatio 101," and depends for its humor on the spectacle of all the girls in the cast chomping away at bananas to master their art. That gag was old when Andy Warhol was a pup. Another disturbing element is the show's deliberate moral ambiguity: while there is a determined air of innocence, of "Sex is beautiful and I am liberated, and whee, we're free," there are also smutty jokes about spectators with raincoats on their laps. Make up your minds, kiddies: either it's honest and innocent or it's designed for dirty old men. Forty-second Street is not the Elysian Fields, and no amount of pretending will make it

Find Your Way Home, by English writer John Hopkins, is an entirely different and more interesting kettle of fish.

The number of really good, serious works—books, films or plays—dealing explicitly with homosexuality is not large, even if you take in all of world literature. All too many of them drown in self pity, or are too clearly rooted in

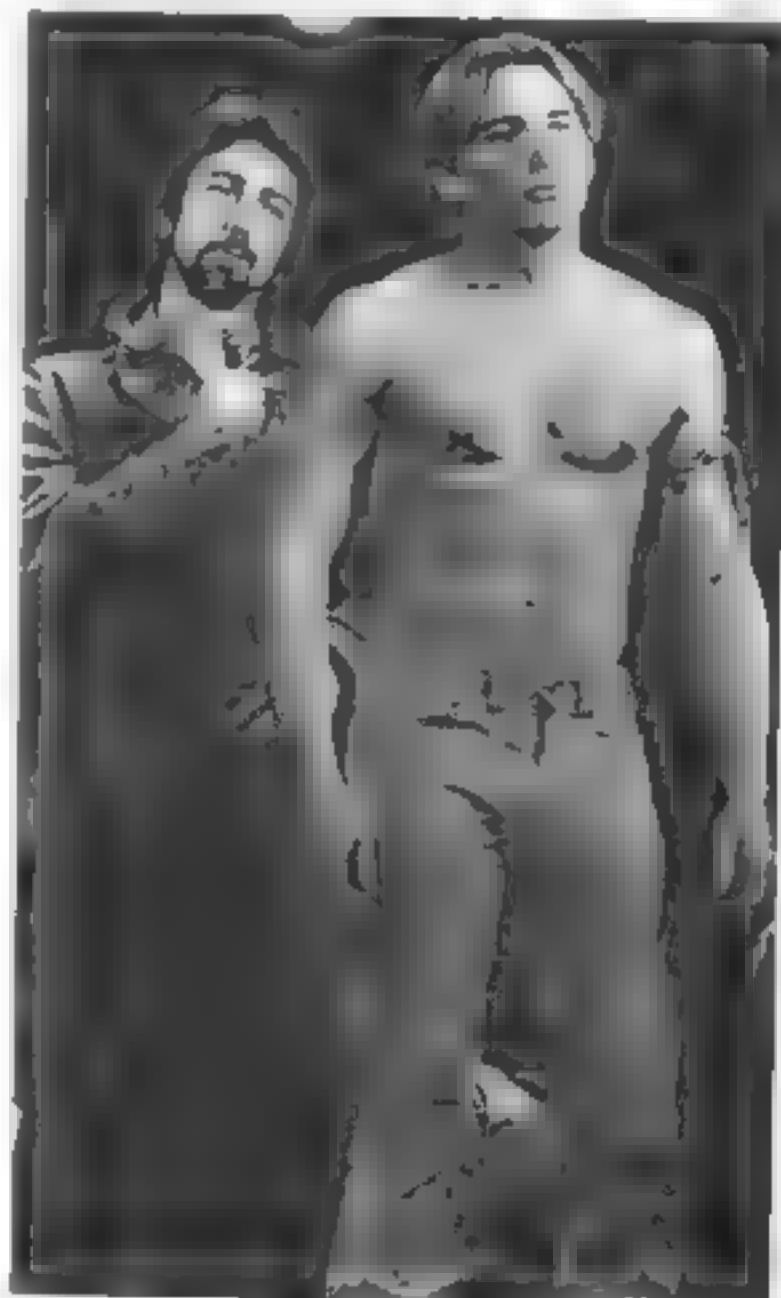


fantasy and wish-fulfillment to be substantial, or they degenerate into porn. Perhaps Marcel Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past* is the only really great one of the lot.

Find Your Way Home is not great, but it may be great, at least in comparison with what has gone before. It transcends its subject matter, and ultimately is simply a play about people. Homo and hetero seem arbitrary categories in a vision as compassionate and encompassing as Mr. Hopkins'. It's a play about the pain and difficulty of loving: tough, unsentimental, uncompromising, painful, sometimes very funny, and ultimately tremendously moving. I don't think the third act entirely works in this production, but it comes so near to it that to complain is ungrateful. And two performances, by Michael Moriarty and Jane Alexander, are absolutely breathtaking.

Mr. Moriarty, reportedly straight as an arrow, is both totally convincing and quite courageous in his depiction of Julian (Julie) Weston, a mousily attractive, vaguely effeminate lower-class boy who has fallen in love with Alan (Lee Richardson), an older, middle-class man with a wife and two children. Julian, for all his wispy, willowy limp-wristedness, is not without courage: he does have the guts to love—neurotically, perhaps, and

Robert Spencer, Harvey Evans (*In Touch*, January 1974), Jerry Lanning (left to right) catch Dixie Carter on the fly in a scene from *Sextet* (Bijou—Page 38, left). Verlaine (Christopher Lloyd) and Rimbaud (Michael Flynn) meet, love, create the poetry and destroy each other in *Total Eclipse* (Chelsea Theatre Center of Brooklyn, Ammon Ben Nomis—page 38, right). Joe Jones and Marty Duffy are fared with the problems of explaining things to their parents in "I'm Gay" (above) and Larry Paul ette sings "Take Me Home With You" to a handsome stranger, Alan Evans, in a bar (below), both from the highly successful *Let My People Come* (Village Gate).



not very wisely but all too well, despite the fact that he is more mistress than wife, and Alan always leaps up from their bed of love to rush home to his wife, Jackie. (Or "What's-her-name," as Julian insistently calls her.)

As the play begins, the guilt of it all has proved too much for Alan, and he has abandoned Julian to renew his fealty to wife and children. Julian is annihilated.

"I hurt a lot—and cried after you left. I used to cry all the time. [Laughing] It got ridiculous. Buses and trains—restaurants—once—I was home—talking to my mother—I started to cry. I said I'd lost my job. I was worried about the rent. She gave me a couple of quid—patted me on the head and told

me, 'Don't worry.' Poor old thing. I wanted to tell her, 'Alan's left me. Gone back to his wife.' Oh, God. Everything there was—I gave it to you—and you went away—and I didn't have it any more. I couldn't give it to anyone else—d'you understand? I gave it to you—that—whatever it is—inside thing—real thing—truthful—me thing—you don't even know you have.... Left on your own—trying with someone else—you find—it doesn't happen—nothing happens. He's all the way inside you—everything's the same—seems to be the same—the noises in your head—the anger—all the struggling—violence—only—you don't feel—there isn't—love. I used to cry all the time. Isn't that ridiculous?"

Julian goes off the deep end—sinks into self-loathing, runs the gamut of abusing both body and spirit: pickups, prostitution, gang-banged, subjected to tortures and humiliations, infected with disease, and subject to terrifying murderous rages. "All those good things," as he says when the antic mood is on him. But still he loves. Masochistic? Yes. Neurotically dependent? Sure. And every other color and condition you can name. He loves. To stave off terror on one dark and lonely night, he takes up with a slob of a neighbor (John Ramsey) who has mooned after him from afar almost as he has mooned after Alan.

Then Alan comes back. He announces he has left his wife and come to live with Julian. Julian is terrified, unwilling to risk being abandoned again. And here Mr. Moriarty is stunning: quivering like jelly with raw feeling, keeping up a brash front, weaker than water and yet somehow stronger than dirt. He savagely mocks Alan and himself, utters self-deprecating little whinnies that could break your heart, and finally in a passionate attempt to deny his love for Alan, finds himself proclaiming it. Too bruised and angry to be able to talk, they retreat into sex and mindlessness. And that's Act One.

In Act Two, Jacqueline, the wife (Jane Alexander) appears on the scene. She is abruptly faced with the fact that her husband is leaving her—for a man. On top of the deep shock of a conventional woman running head-on into homosexuality for the first time, her

self-esteem, her belief in herself as a woman, is laid waste. Miss Alexander matches Mr. Moriarty's virtuosity and sincerity, and she is equally devastating as this horsey decent woman whose life suddenly blows up in her face. She is incredibly fine and moving as she tries desperately to hold her marriage—or at least herself—together, and to extract from her husband at least enough affirmation of her own value to give her the courage to face going home alone.

Once she has gone, Julian's slobby one-night stand returns, bent on seeing that Alan does not break up what he sees as his own quite satisfactory affair with Julian. The action that follows strips all of them bare, shatters illusions, and forces them to face the ugly facts of their mutual lives. Out of that, Alan and Julian decide to go on together. And we are left no more certain of how they will fare than Julian is. He clings to the hope of one day arriving at a point where there is more love than pain. The relationship still throbs with buried hostilities, secret agendas, pitfalls. But they have decided to try, together.

In Mr. Moriarty's hands, Julian emerges as a shabbily heroic figure, petulant, bitchy, but courageous in his scathing refusal to let Jackie brand his relations with Alan as something dirty. And herein lies Mr. Moriarty's courage: at every moment in the play, he is called upon to do and feel precisely the things that our society says a man must never ever do or feel. He never draws back, never flinches, never hesitates, never even betrays a sign of effort. He goes all the way. And that, I think, is what gives him that special quality he shares with Miss Alexander: both radiate a kind of decency. No matter how ugly the things they are called upon to do or say, they always preserve the sense of striving humanity that lies beneath the pain, the weakness, the perversions of the spirit.

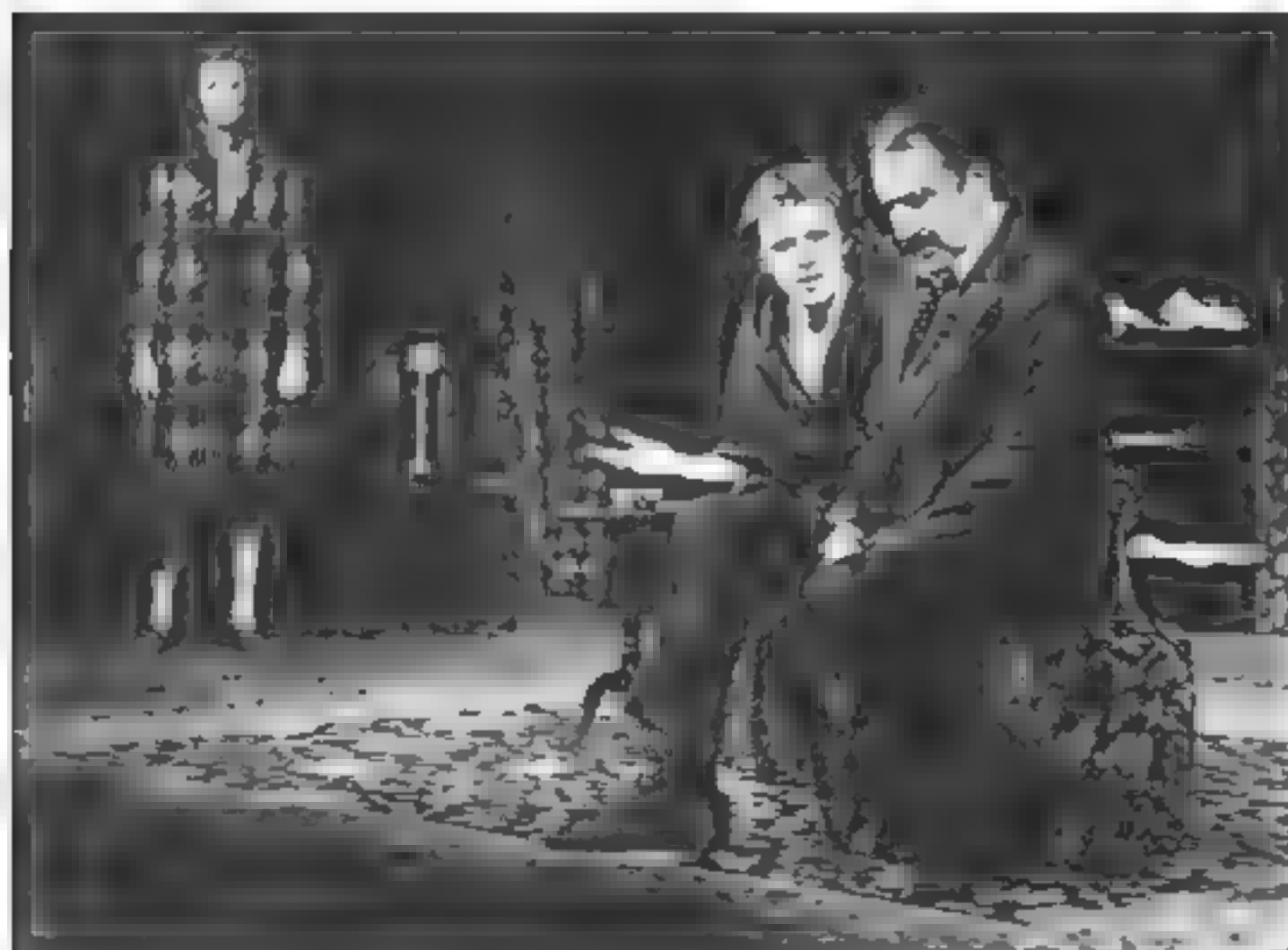
The basic problem in the Broadway production is the character of Alan: he remains shadowy, uninflected. And he should be the central figure in the play. Some critics have called Lee Richardson's performance a bad one. Others have blamed the play because they say the character is ill-written. (Interestingly enough the English production received almost identical reviews in this respect.) I suspect neither is true. Mr. Richardson is not bad. He is sometimes splendid.





But he is wrong, as a pair of pliers is wrong when you need a screwdriver. Mr. Moriarty and Miss Alexander have a magnificent transparency. Their every thought and impulse is visible, almost seems to strike us in the face. Mr. Richardson is opaque. And so we lose him. We don't know his heart. What is wanted is an Olivier, or a George C. Scott, or

A famous author (Hume Cronyn) and his ex-wife (Anne Baxter) battle for possession of a packet of love letters which would reveal his homosexual past in *A Song at Twilight* (Page 40, above), and Jessica Tandy (left) is too preoccupied with throwing a dinner party to notice a budding love affair between her husband (Hume Cronyn) and an Italian contessa (Anne Baxter) in *Come Into the Garden, Maude* (Page 40, below) which make up *Noel Coward in Two Keys* (Ethel Barrymore Theatre). Joe Esquibal discovers that David Fernandez is a great talker, but not a listener in a sketch from *Lovers* (above left). Barnett Keller and author Peter del Vaile play older lovers who have been together for twenty years in *Lovers* (above right). Martin Rivera with a nail file is a Puerto Rican queen who loves Maria Montez. Jerry Bell is a fellow cruiser in the gay bar scene from *Lovers* (below left). Leather Boys, David Fernandez and Joe Esquibal, do a music hall number called "Punishment" in *Lovers* (below).



Julian (Michael Morarty, left, who won the 1974 Tony award for this portrayal) improvises a fast explanation of pickup (John Ransley, center) when he receives an unexpected visit from ex-lover Alan (Lee Richardson) in *Find Your Way Home* (top left). Julian, unable to pretend that he doesn't love the man who deserted him, takes Alan in his arms (top right). When Alan's wife, Jackie (Jane Alexander) follows him, she is doubly disconcerted to find not a mistress but a man. Julian implores that Alan not let her brand their relationship dirty (above left). Alan is torn between his love and loyalty to his young lover and his wife of 20 years (above right). Jackie seeks reassurance from Alan who is leaving her to live with his young male lover (Page 43, left). Though their love is riddled with conflicts, guilt and buried hostilities, Julian and Alan decide to try to make a life together (Page 43, right).

a Brando, who could make it admit light, and let us feel the man's every pulse and tremor even while he's doing nothing. Given the right Alan, this production might have taken off like a skyrocket, and become the runaway hit of the season rather than the modest success that it has become.

Interesting here was the reaction of the critics in the (more or less) straight press. Richard Watts loathed it, of course. He was not content to pan it violently in his initial review, but went on attacking it day after day in his column. *The Village Voice* asserted that there are only three possible attitudes toward homosexuality, enumerated

them, and said the play was boring to all of them, and besides it is a soap opera. Rex Reed, in the *Daily News*, who ought to know better, just said that plays about people named Julian are usually dreadful. So much for the critics. (*Time* and Clive Barnes did praise it.) As Erik Bruhn once said, "Critics always prefer dead things to live ones because live things refuse to fit into their categories." And clearly "soap opera" is now a cult word. In these days of fear of feeling, "soap opera" is the weapon we use to demolish any work that is in danger of making us feel. Or think.

Noel Coward in *Two Keys* is a lighter

brew, over-remniscent of earlier Coward, but still sound enough to be fun. Of the two one-act plays, *Come Into the Garden*, Maude is the lighter: a tale of an American businessman who escapes the domination of his cold, pushy, snobbish, social-climbing wife and elopes with a minor Sicilian noblewoman. It's so slight it almost disappears, but it does have its charms. And Jessica Tandy's midwestern bitch is etched in acid, with a voice so authentic and so sharp it could curdle cream. In her gown of blue sequins, her jeweled tiara, and blue hair, she casts a deeper chill than Hans Andersen's Snow Queen. Hume Cronyn displays a brand of Will Rogers/Jimmy Stewart charm that might well appeal to a sophisticated European, and Anne Baxter, looking lovely, reveals a formidable arsenal of technical proficiency that allows her to score points with style and keeps the play moving even when one can't quite believe her.

The second play, *A Song at Twilight*, is Mr. Coward's only work to deal overtly with homosexuality. His first play, *The Vortex*, had overtones, but only for those who chose to see them, and in *Design for Living*, the relationships were left deliberately ambiguous.

The current play drops the mask, with its portrait of an aging author of renown (reportedly based on Somerset Maugham) who is revealed as a vain, pampered, bad-tempered, closet queen

He has allowed the man who was his one real lover to die in sickness and poverty, and contracted several marriages and heterosexual liaisons to conceal his homosexuality and preserve his myth. But suddenly, from out of the past comes his first wife—an indifferently successful actress—who reenters his life in an attempt to blackmail him with a packet of love letters he had written years before to his male lover.

The homosexuality is handled discreetly: kept out of sight, set forty years in the past. Both partners are presented as morally deficient, one has died in poverty and the other is an embittered old man as a result of having devoted his entire life to suppressing his own nature. A picture that might have been painted by a Victorian moralist—and Richard Watts was delighted! This, he tells us, is how homosexuality ought to be presented on the stage!

Hume Cronyn's performance as the author is incisive, stylish and rich, and it works on all the obvious levels, though it does leave the depths somewhat unplumbed. Miss Baxter, as the actress, is on firmer ground here, and does some fascinating things: marvelously ambiguous line readings, and one real *tour de force*: she succeeds in playing an old woman who has managed to go on looking young. "Time hasn't forgotten me. But I didn't forget time either, and took the necessary precautions." Though

appearing young and radiant, by an artful use of the spine, a way of moving, of never standing quite erect, she keeps us always aware of the old woman beneath the skin. Lovely. But again, it is Miss Tandy, with her gift for accents and voices—and most importantly her sense of reality—who carries off the honors. She plays with precision and feeling the refugee from Nazi Germany who has served for years as the great man's secretary, and finally married him, though she knows his secret and expects no love from him: she has found it is better to be needed by someone than wanted by no one. And it is she who (with Coward's help) provides the moral force that shapes the play.

Lovers is an authentic Gay Lib musical, and wonder of wonders, it is really gay. Produced on a shoestring in a basement (The Basement, in fact) on Church Street in Lower Manhattan, by a gay cooperative called The Other Side of Silence, it had a sadly limited run—but there are hopes of its reopening elsewhere.

Author Peter del Valle has provided a book and lyrics that have a real point of view, make their points with a canny wit, and consistently avoid the pitfalls of propaganda. And Steven Sterner has composed a score that is never less than appropriate, and at its best, exciting.

The show touches all bases, from
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discovery

Rediscovering the World Through the Eyes of



RON FRASER

by Hugh Harrison
with photos by the author

The very first thing you notice about Ron Fraser is that overwhelming size of his. It's hard to overlook a six-foot-three-inch, two-hundred-pound frame supporting a pair of shoulders that seems to be as wide as he is tall. He has a well-structured face that's right out of the typical, Hollywood-handsome mold. Impressive is only a mild way to describe his overall effect and the usual reactions to him.

That big, easy-swinging physique of his serves him very well. He sees to that. The biggest asset of his impressive build is that it's been able to let him have a laid-back approach to life. Trouble . . . all kinds of trouble . . . simply back away from that kind of presence. He's well aware of all of this and is content to let his stature play itself, with no strain and no problems. It works. It works very well! It's developed this easy outlook on life. It all comes to him as naturally as his impressive physical appearance came to him. He doesn't need to push either of them.

This laid-back, easy approach to life is coupled with an open, up-front charm that really endears Ron not only to the people who meet him but to everyone who comes into brief contact with him. He still remembers, with an amused, ironic chuckle, when he first got to Hollywood. This noticeably big man with his noticeably small-town manner wandered up and down Hollywood Boulevard overcome with awe at the sights and amazed by the people. He smiled a big, friendly greeting to everyone he passed. Imagine the reaction from our local flora and fauna! Even today the slick sophistication so many others seek for themselves, Ron has managed to neatly avoid, holding on to his friendly, small-town charm. It's a great approach to big-city living and for Ron probably the only approach to all the inherent hassle. It adds even more to Ron's engaging friendliness. This small-town approach is not something Ron dreamed up or worked to develop. He is a small-town boy. He hails from a very small lumber community in the northern end of Washington state. It was here that he first realized how well he could make his build work for him.

Despite his twenty-odd years, in many ways Ron is still surprisingly young. He's managed to hang on to all the virtues of his small-town upbringing while leaving behind most of its hang-ups. In many other ways, though, there's a wise maturity far beyond his years. It's the maturity, both physical and mental, that makes time so important to Ron. He's trying desperately to make up, in some way, for everything he feels he's frittered away in all those earlier years. He's afraid he'll wake up one day with nothing to show for any of it. True to his typical Taurus nature, Ron remains strongly in the present . . . with one foot planted firmly in tomorrow. He's not given to the past, either its regrets or its joys. There were only a few quick looks back to all those early years. One, and only one, was clouded with some dark, nearly unspoken emotion. It was soon quickly swept away . . . a bitter memory that had to do with aiding his brother and ex-wife . . . buying a beauty shop for her, which she promptly lost through mismanagement, and securing a job and schooling for his brother which he, too, in some manner, managed to dribble away. A few clenched words were recalled through a straight-line mouth, devoid of emotion.

The move to Los Angeles became a whole new beginning for him . . . the jobs, this city and the people. It was leaving behind hard times . . . leaving behind Washington, along with wife and brother . . . bounding right on into tomorrow. He was hoping to make up for those earlier wasted times with happier, better

times. It seems as far as Ron's concerned, he hasn't managed to get anywhere or accomplish anything. This is a good example of his tendency to be much too hard on himself. His harshest judgments are all reserved for himself. He has great respect for other people and that respect is carried through in all his relationships. Ron accepts them at face value, never judging them too harshly. This idea that he's never accomplished anything is, of course, belied by the facts. He worked hard in the lumber camp to provide his family with a bit more money while he was going to school and later put himself through some college, paying his own way, not to mention the help and support he gave his brother and ex-wife. Still, it all doesn't seem to matter to Ron. He thinks of himself as something of a loser. He isn't sitting still for it though. He's re-aimed all that power, his ability to help and offer support, taking it away from siphoning, non-productive relationships and turning it, rechanneling it back into himself



and his own life. Now he's beginning to win. If he ever was a loser, he's now well on his way to becoming a winner in a big way.

Of course it hasn't all been sunshine. Nothing ever is. Ron even realizes that if it were that eventually it would be dull. His charming smile shines up his face, easily, happily. He confides that maybe he was trying to run away from trouble, only to find, like all those others before him, that it just can't be done. When it did find him again he could have run away again, having already commenced his fleeing from yesterday. He could have told himself that such was his lot in life, that of a loser. Not for Ron! The new beginnings had given him a newfound determination and he met trouble, head-on, on its own terms.

"I was holding down two jobs then, one as a shoe salesman and the other as a bouncer at the Bitter End West. Then I started to school again . . . in order to learn, to accomplish. The grind just got to me, I guess. I was only gettin' about three or







four hours' sleep a night. I had to quit the shoe store, then the End closed. I was caught short . . . no money. So, no money . . . no school, it's just that simple."

Ron soon found another job with very little difficulty. He fell back on his impressive physical appearance and, in short order, was back bouncing again, this time at the brand new rock club, Starwood. Just as quickly he restarted his schooling. Ron's amusement about those times as a bouncer are still barely contained. He's just not violent by nature, having gotten what little existed in him out of his system long ago. In this job his impressive physique did its work for him very well indeed. In the meantime, he'd added Karate to his agenda in school, which gave him the ability to meet and deal with any real problems. He only ran into one, however, when some nut came after him with a gun after being refused service because he was too young. Ron, in a burst of sheer terror, managed to tackle him and get his gun away.

"Afraid? I was scared shitless!"

Now that's my kind of hero. He very soon left all this to work as an exterminator. It's much easier to control bugs than it is people. Besides, one gun in your face is one too many.

It all adds up to an uncluttered, no-nonsense approach to life, money, work, and just about everything else important to Ron. Take his schooling, for example. He's concentrating on air conditioning, its repair and installation. This choice was arrived at after long, careful consideration. In his own laid-back, easy style it's a simple, direct approach to his future . . . nothing fancy, just a steady, secure California industry. It's one that offers him lots of opportunity. He can learn it quickly and soon qualify for a high-paying job, and it still can offer him real growth opportunity. It's a true picture of Taurus Rising.

Ron feels that the one big thing that this town has taught him is adaptability. It's very true and he's learned well. In the

mountains, the photo session we did there was one of fun and constant discovery for him. It's amazing. It was a cold, wet day that would have sent anyone else scurrying back for the protection of either a real shelter or at least some personality quirk (It's too cold. It's too wet. I can't go on . . . etc.). With Ron, it just didn't happen that way. Not only did he not complain about the weather or the work, but was bright and creative. More than just doing a modeling session, he actually took part in it. It's what every photographer dreams of but seldom finds. Ron fitted in with all those rocks and high, craggy peaks as if he'd been there always, as if he really belonged to the mountains, his build complementing all those other natural formations. A few natural, long strides put him quickly up the side of those mountains. He was born for this. So I thought. Later, when we were working in the house, around the pool and in the patio, I found myself looking on in amazement. Ron had remolded his impressive being to fit in so naturally with those hills and now he was doing exactly the same thing here . . . all so easily. He effortlessly insinuated himself into his surroundings, any of his surroundings, being them and becoming them, and they, him.

The entire day was one of fun and discovery for both of us. Ron, expanding his knowledge, ran happily, headlong into something new, perfectly playing off his boy-next-door, small-town charm in some strange harmonious contrast to his heroic, larger-than-life physical presence. I, in turn, was led down a number of familiar Hollywood paths in some crazy, new, exciting way. Ron's rediscovery and straightforward response to all these things and places I'd taken for granted so long produced a reaction in me I wasn't quite prepared for . . . it was like looking through someone else's eyes. I managed, in a few short hours, to rediscover my own, familiar world, new and fresh, through the eyes of Ron Fraser.



life styles

by Jim Kepner
illustration by J.D. Klamik

THOSE WHO FORGET HISTORY



J.D. KLAMIK

The renowned philosopher George Santayana, whose open gayness scandalized other Harvard faculty members, once said that those who will not learn from their history are condemned to repeat it.

Gays often turn their backs on their past. They wish not to be burdened by family or tradition. If they have any significant history as Gays, they pay no attention to it. The attitude is, 'Don't bother me with what happened 20 or 200 years ago; just you get Tilly Law off my back so I can enjoy myself today.'

Yet we watch Gays as a group of presumably non-masochistic persons repeatedly doing the equivalent of putting their hands on a hot stove. An individual learns by experience or by instruction not to do that unless he relishes blistered hands—and history (whatever Byzantine joys it may offer connoisseurs) is the recorded or suppressed memory of a society, a lineage, a group.

Any individual could hardly move safely through this obstacle-strewn world, could hardly satisfy his needs and desires, faced so constantly with a multiplicity of choices, without the aid of his memory. Yet it is often assumed that an Inchoate group needs no such self-guidance! Each locality, group or association has such a group memory which functions much like personal memory—how to get safely from here to there, plus the aesthetic pleasure and therapeutic value which memory, with its art of storytelling, provides. But group memory is unfortunately not stored as neatly or automatically as is individual memory. It requires the special efforts of individual scribes to assemble and record it, to correct and interpret it, to conscientiously digest and assess what the individual assesses somewhat unconsciously.

And groups which have been stigmatized, driven underground, largely stripped of their consciousness as groups, are likely to have lost perhaps forever most of their record. Before their history can have much meaning, it must be painfully excavated and, where possible, reconstructed.

* * * *

This way of asserting the utility of history simplifies it badly. We know that either group or individual can consult "memory" and jump to wrong conclusions, deciding on inadequate evidence that something which didn't work before is therefore not worth trying now, failing to dig deeper into the history/memory to find if there were *other* reasons why that something failed before. (Do we not recall the simplistic charge that Greece and Rome fell because there were homosexuals around?)

Such trivializing historic logic has ironically hampered many homophile organizations in which I've worked. Too often, participants in the failure of one group help start its successor, and overreact to "the" factor they *think* wrecked the first: people we didn't know got in; or we let certain types seize control; we had too many nit-picking rules; or the rules weren't specific enough; or one project capsized the whole.

Did the 1953 Mattachine Society swamp itself with endless by-law revisions? Was it too easy for inexperienced newcomers to dominate the group? So ONE Incorporated set up virtually unchangeable by-laws, isolating the directors from new blood.

Was PRIDE, L.A.'s first street-militant group (1965-68), sabotaged by its leaders' ego trips? Then Gay Lib would recognize no leaders nor structure. Was GLF too chaotic, too unselective for worthwhile jobs? The Gay Community Alliance tried a more ordered approach . . . etc.

We do need to learn from our mistakes—but less simplisti-

cally, lest our attempts to correct past errors lead to ever new excesses.

* * * *

We seek in our hidden history the record of our group perseverance; the key to our creativity; the search for Gay Spirit, antic and loving; indicators of whether Gays serve unwittingly special societal functions, a birthright denied us today, and an escape from the atomism which has denied our worldwide bond of fellowship.

We need to understand the wellsprings of homophobia, seeking in that historic pathology a formula for its exorcism. We seek a yardstick to measure the humanism and the creativity of societies by their use of minorities. We look to history, as to fiction, for edifying tales of persons elsewhere, who shared our impulses and dilemmas, our joys and sorrows.

THE STYLE & FUNCTION OF HISTORIC COMMEMORATION

At this fifth annual commemoration of the Stonewall riots, which transformed America's gay freedom movement, some are objecting to the carnival tone which they regard as inconsistent with the event being recalled. I think that something inherent in our spirit as Gays (though perhaps repressed in some of us) loves the glitter, the symbolic masquerade and the tomfoolery of such festivals—so much that we may validly claim that most of the world's great carnivals started as gay folk holidays before being ripped off by het promoters.

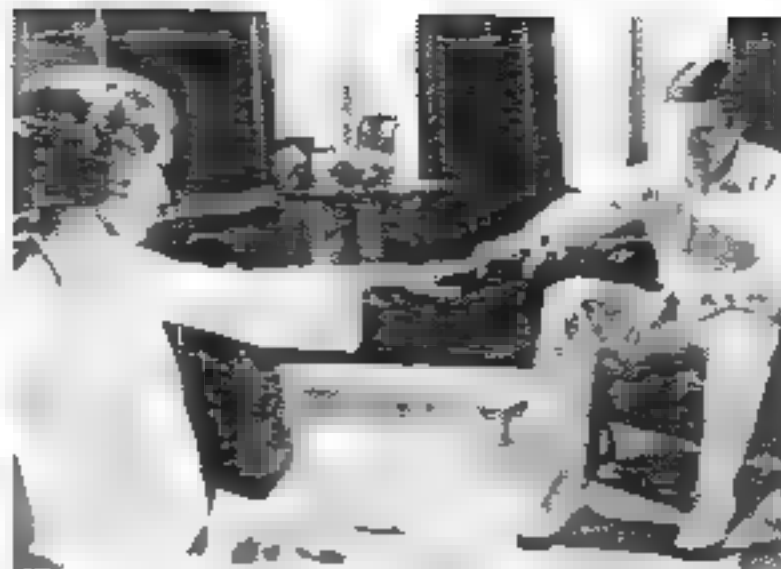
The rambunctious mummery, florid costumery, deliberate attempts to shock viewers out of their complacency, the banners and shouting, assertively militant or merely joyous, and above all the outpouring of camaraderie, our freemasonry suddenly taking a public face, are not at all out of place in celebration of the 1969 events in New York's Sheridan Square, when uppity queens spontaneously decided they'd been shoved too far. Gay politicals may wish to keep it all very pompous, and public-relations-minded Gays may want it kept prissy-clean, but the gay spirit will out in all its wild variety (if each class of Gays can admit that they hold no monopoly on appropriate gay lifestyles, letting each do his or her own thing).

Nonetheless this last weekend in each June commemorates both our long-continued oppression and our half-begun liberation. And this like other great historic dates has already gathered to itself additional occasions for commemoration. As July 4th commemorates the U.S. Declaration of Independence, so it also recalls the death of signators Adams and Jefferson, and the emulation of that document, often on the same date, in several other nations.

Similarly our Christopher Street celebrations henceforth commemorate not merely the 1969 Stonewall bar events, but the resultant rise of the Gay Lib movement; the tremendous spirit of those early parades in cities large and small; the memory of that fantastic sun halo in Sacramento, the terrible holocaust at the Upstairs Bar in New Orleans last year (just after they had sung, "United we stand, divided we fall"); a full three years of burning bars, churches and centers; and so many astonishing gains.

There is another memory which has significance for us not only as a horror story—which it is. Our Christopher St. commemorations this year occur on the 40th anniversary of the "Night of the Long Knives": a weekend slaughter of scores of

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In Touch

Francois Truffaut's *Day for Night* is a magnificent tribute to filmmaking. With an unabashed romantic realism Truffaut reveals all the sincere and silly of human feelings that pour out of the cast and crew of a production unit during shooting. Only the greatest of masters could handle such honesty about his art with the grace and good humor that makes this film, *Day for Night*, the greatest piece of entertainment that will probably honor the silver screen in this decade. It is clear that for years to come the film's joyous experiences of shifting in and out of reality and make-believe will be both the most educational and entertaining one for film students and filmgoers alike.

Somehow the film maintains a perfect temperance between joy and lament. While slowly creating the wonderful feeling of *esprit de corps* shared by

After a night together, Jacqueline Bisset bids goodbye to Jean-Pierre Leaud in Truffaut's *Day For Night* (Warner Bros.—top left). Mia Farrow reaches for Robert Redford as she looks at his scrapbook of her in *The Great Gatsby* (Paramount—top center). In *The Three Musketeers*, D'Artagnan (Michael York) and Mme. Bonanieux (Raquel Welch) pledge their love (20th Century-Fox—top right). Jane Connell, Bea Arthur and Lucille Ball celebrate Gooch's emancipation in *Mame* (Warner Bros.—above left). Zero Mostel succumbs to rhinocerositis as Gene Wilder looks helplessly on in Lescroart's *Rhinoceros* (American Film Theatre—above center). In the title role of *Luther*, Stacy Keach as Brother Martin prepares to celebrate his First Mass (American Film Theatre—above right). Granny Gang forced into retirement fight the boredom by hanging out in a leys, drinking beer, and terrorizing the streets of London in *And Now for Something Completely Different* (Columbia Pictures—left). In Andy Warhol's *Flesh for Frankenstein*, Sordjan Zelenovik plays the Frankenstein monster who has no interest in women (Bryanston—right).

the production unit of the fictitious film, *Meet Pamela*, Truffaut's diary-running narration also reminds us that films like *Meet Pamela* cannot be made anymore. This persistent honesty elevates the lament out of sentimentality and makes a statement that is neither bitter nor foolish but a tribute that allows the audience to escape into the lives of its characters long enough to understand film people but not so long as to forget themselves as they could be if engaged in a frustrating labor of love, as all film people are.

Day for Night will stand long between the clashing waves of cynicism and nostalgia, submitting to neither.

It seems odd that just as Truffaut is lamenting that films like *Meet Pamela*—films in the old Hollywood tradition—can and will no longer be made, big pro-

ductions like *Gatsby*, *The Three Musketeers*, and *Mame* are in release.

In *The Great Gatsby* echoes of the Jazz Age linger in empty hallways, while sheer silk curtains blow in the breeze of nostalgia, and the agony of an era filled with self-deception is heard in the scratches of an old record playing "What'll I Do," the theme song for *Gatsby*'s romance. The visions of the Jazz Age are draped on men's clothing like "symbols of the power that man must hold and that passes from race to race.... We were the most powerful nation. Who could tell us any longer what was fashionable and what was fun?"

Theoni V. Aldredge, who created the costumes for *The Great Gatsby*, has drawn the nostalgia out of the sets and stages of this colossal production and created a wave in fashion that has cut

with films

short the hair of the most radical chic men. She has made it a mean task to separate the Gatsby film from the Gatsby look. The phenomenon has become a happening so enormous as to approach the absurd with a cynical abandon that flirts with traditional nostalgia craze with the most insincere bad form. The Gatsby phenomenon like the Redford charm, smugness, reflects a dangerous boredom in the land.

Gatsby the film, although it be the seed of the phenomenon, is quite separate and apart from this attitude. The script as executed by Francis Ford Coppola is delicately poignant and at its most powerful in after thoughts. While the novel shakes an accusing finger at the ruling class, the script sharply criticizes the cruelty of their indulgences. Up from under all the frosting of the Gatsby production the warnings cut through. Unlike most political films The Great Gatsby stirs up a hatred for the wealthy classes that simmers today in a cynical pool of mockery called fashion.

Interviews with a man in front of Arthur J's.

Me: Did you see The Great Gatsby?

He: Most certainly!

Me: What did you like about the movie?

He: Well, I think that Robert Redford is the ... is *the* HUNKIEST—.

Me: Is that all you liked about the film?

He: Yeah, that's about it.

Me: What didn't you like the most?

He: Well, I didn't like the end, when he died.

Me: What did you think of the guy who played Mia Farrow's husband?

[Bruce Dern]

He: Oh yeah, he was dynamite.

Me: What did you think of the girl who played the mechanic's wife? [Karen Black]

He: She was just a climber, looking for a higher goal.

Me: What did you think about the photography?

He: It was absolutely scrumptious.

Me: The Great Gatsby was a big movie with all these production numbers and it also was very, very romantic. What do you think of them making movies of this kind nowadays?

He: I liked it but I thought it was a little too violent. Robert Redford appeared too late in the movie

Me: Don't you think that added to his air of mystery and made him more romantic?

He: He is romantic enough by himself for me

* * * *

Against moviemaking in the grand tradition of spectacle, scope, and a galaxy of stars pit an offbeat comic director long associated with radio and TV "goon" shows and you have, you have. . . . Well, whatever it is. It is fun. Richard Lester directs The Three Musketeers as neither a camp nor a burlesque and yet it is filled with plenty of both. So many different styles are brought to the film that his job must have been to coordinate all the converging elements. The story is moved along at an exciting pace while none of Dumas' humor is passed over. The realism of the sword fights are as disturbing as killing should be and the romanticism is as silly as people can be. It is all brought together well and yet the whole is not as interesting as any one of its parts. Maybe you just can't take fun movies seriously without them falling apart into their better parts.

Besides all the silliness and realism in Lester's The Three Musketeers there is more than an ample weight of beauty, not only in the exquisite sets, costumes, and photography are the scales loaded but with Michael York they are tipped towards the rare and the sublime beauty found in "boy-become-man." Michael York is D'Artagnan in this huge new production of the Dumas classic. He shares with his character an idealism for the period and the qualities that exemplified it. "For me the novel and the film are really a sentimental education," he says.

"D'Artagnan is the archetypical romantic hero. He is gallant, brave, a ladies' man, fearless, loyal, you name it. Except at the same time there is a redeeming quality; he is also a bit of a silly ass. This slight absurdity is implied in the original book, but it's much more interesting in the film because it is so appropriate to director Richard Lester's vision."

* * * *

Mame, a movie meant for the gay consciousness but packaged for straight suburbia, is ludicrous but still enjoyable.

Mame, a musical document of the Art Deco era, is shiny bronze, carrara marble, fluted vases, onyx clocks, and Winston Churchill. Through this kaleidoscope we watch an extremely liberated woman bringing up her nephew in New York City from 1928 to 1948, enjoying the fads and culture twists as they come along in montage.

Mame's Art Deco life reached its high point in the Thirties. It drew on various sources including Art Nouveau cubism, the Russian Ballet, American Indian art, and Bauhaus. It was big then and it is beginning to get big now. (See review of Rhinoceros.)

On the Mame sets, lamps in black and iridescent plastic, smooth-lined nude statues, chrome steel-framed chairs with black leather cushions, and a square-faced upright clock with cocktail equipment concealed within are some of the notable representations of the period.

Interview with a fellow in front of the Paramount Theater during the Los Angeles International Film Exposition, FILMEX

Me: What do you think of Lucy's Mame?

Fellow: Considering Lucy didn't play herself, I don't know if she should have or not, since she actually acted I'm glad the film held up, even though the Auntie Mame sophistication was not there.

Me: Then how did it hold up?

Fellow: At times she succeeded in being sophisticated but then she looked like a carbon copy of Eleanor Parker in *The Sound of Music*.

Me: Carbon copy . . . Lucy?!

Fellow: Yeah, even to the hairdo and eyebrows and sideward glances, especially the sideward glances.

Me: And that's not what she should have succeeded in being, right?

Fellow: Of course, but Eleanor Parker wasn't quite what she should have been either. I'm just speaking in terms of mannerisms, not roles. Those times when Lucy's mannerisms were on target they wound up being that carbon copy, especially in that sequence on the Georgia plantation.

Me: What about Beatrice Arthur? ["Maude"]

Fellow: She looked like she was imitating a drag queen imitating Tallulah Bankhead. It seems as if her lines were

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INTOUCH

with books



The Best Little Boy in the World (Putnam's, \$7.95, 247 pages) is John Reid's joyous account of an exquisitely awkward growing up and coming out in New York and vicinity. Perhaps publishers will soon take note of the fact that these ceremonies occur with even wider variety in other parts of the country, still this is a delightful and informative account, a pleasant addition to the growing body of sane and low-key literature of gay affirmation.

There was little that was traumatic in John's boyhood (that unfortunately is not his real name; mustn't embarrass the family, you know). His parents were loving, intelligent, comfortable, though they overloaded him with the proprieties. He was an inveterate over-achiever by the age of three, working without letup to be the best little boy in the world (frequently abbreviated as BLBITW), the sort who will never break even the tiniest rule, who always does everything that BLBITWs are expected to do, and wouldn't dream of being naughty, even if he soon develops an admiration for boys who are somewhat naughty.

The narration is at times a bit too cutesy-poo for a boy who is otherwise building so solidly masculine a front, but John realizes early that his BLBITW existence is a sham, that he really isn't that good at all—but the more up-short he feels, the harder he tries: extra projects for every class in school, extra practice in those sports where he can excel without the embarrassment of being the last to be chosen, and the one who is sure to drop the ball in the last of the ninth with the bases loaded and Golden Boy at bat.

There is a succession of Golden Boys, handsomer and more daring than he, the sort John dreams of "being cowboys with"—that mythic vision of masculine fellowship and freedom far from all the

piddling rules that have kept him imprisoned as the BLBITW.

Does he hear that his Golden Boys at summer camp are doing naughty things with the counselors or with even less accessible fellows? John could never do those things, for crying out loud! He can't even imagine what those things might be. He was eighteen before he ever dared to fart, and it took him a few months after that to learn to masturbate. Readers who have never felt inhibition, or who have forgotten that they once did, may find his backwardness improbable; but it is not only real, it is fairly common. He was not held back by guilt; rather by an excess of sanitary rules and etiquette which can be as binding as any guilt complex. Even when he learns his own identity, understanding those dreams of "being cowboys," his inhibitions hold him. Whatever the practices were in the ranchlands of western America in the 1880's, movie images had convinced him that "cowboys don't kiss." Even when he got to bed with guys who seem, in appearance, to fill the bill, he is rarely able to do what is expected.

Yet he saw quite clearly what he was doing to himself (the major fallacy of psychoanalysis as a therapeutic method is the assumption that understanding our motivations will automatically change them) though it took him awhile to approach a state which could be called liberated. But he is still, after all, an over-achiever. And though he grows up hampered by inhibitions, he is quite free of the old Judy-tragic "Why-was-I-born?" syndrome which made so many patients according to the prescriptions of Dr. Bergler.

A beautiful, fun book, cutting scalpel clean. . . .

Pornography and Sexual Deviance, by Goldstein & Kant (University of Cali-

fornia Press, \$7.95, 200 pages) reports a research commissioned by the U.S. Commission on Pornography and Obscenity. The Legal and Behavioral Institute of Beverly Hills in an attempt to test the old assumption that pornography causes sex crimes and sexual deviation tested groups of convicted sex offenders; of Gays supplied by ONE Incorporated; of transsexuals; of adult bookstore and skinflck theatre customers; of Blacks; and a "control" group to represent as closely as possible the average white Christian population. This book details their general finding that it was the control group rather than the several deviant groups which had resorted most to pornography, and those deviants whose sex habits involved some social danger (rapists and child molesters) were exactly the ones having had least access to such materials!

An important book for anyone interested in the technical aspects of the pornography question.

The Man Who Folded Himself by David Gerrold (Popular Library, 95¢, 160 pages) is an even more challenging story by a sci-fi writer about whom I recently complained that homoerotic elements in his plotting called for fuller exploration. He here explores the traditional paradoxes of time travel, and opens up gay elements in a way rare for that genre. Now what happens if you journey back in time and so change the past as to radically alter the milieu you came from: trip up John Wilkes Booth in Ford's Theatre; make a sudden noise which causes Napoleon's mother to have a miscarriage; or kill your own father before your birth? Does that erase the world you grew up in? That paradox led to the notion of parallel time-lines, or worlds branching off each time some time-traveler dropped his hat. But take a real busy tourist, bouncing backwards

and forwards in time, meeting himself (a multiplicity of himself) coming and going, until altered duplicates of himself become his entire world, until at last he becomes his own lover many times over, then his own wife and father. . . Really a groovy, sensual, vari-textured story, but not recommended for those who feel uncomfortable in seven-league boots.

The Lesbian Myth by Bettie Wysor (Random, \$8.95, 438 pages) is somewhat mistitled. There has been a severe shortage of well-done books on female Gays. Much so-called lesbian fiction is written by males as male pornography. But this book errs in another direction, which ironically is why I recommend it most strongly to a predominantly male audience: the author summarizes the general subject of homosexuality so well and so freshly that she is halfway through her book before she has given more than a few passing references to female homosexuality. One might complain that she shows an ignorance of much crucial work in this field, but she assembles so much interesting new material in answering the tired old charges that homosexuality is either sinful, unnatural or sick that her book could be recommended even to those males who don't want to read anything about women.

The sections that are about women include a long reprise of Jeannette Foster's excellent 1956 book, *Sex Variant Women in Literature*, and 140 pages of verbatim rap sessions of gay women discussing lesbian lifestyles, gay activism, lesbian mothers and sexuality.

Immensely readable, unusually informative, carefully done, despite a few very conservative biases, and a failure to give any source for long quotes from Margaret Mead. More attention to the special conditions of female homosexuality in the first half would have been appropriate though.

Portrait of a Marriage by Nigel Nicolson (Atheneum, \$10, 249 pages), like the four filial portraits I reviewed in January, is a son's tribute to his illustrious parents, both predominantly gay. Novelist-poetess-memoirist Vita Sackville-West, growing up in the largest private house in England, had barely married rising young diplomat Harold Nicolson in 1913 (after a trial to prove her

mother's illegitimate birth, so as to inherit Knole and the Sackville title) when she rushed into a well-publicized and tempestuous love affair with Violet Keppel, who in turn married a young man she didn't love, leading both desperate husbands and four sets of parents chasing all over Europe to bring back the errant wives. Vita dressed as a man part of this time, and she and Violet both wrote fairly frank accounts of their romance. Yet her sons remained ignorant of it until a spiteful grandmother told young Ben years later.

The present book is constructed beautifully from a thoughtful memoir written by Vita in 1920 and son Nigel's skilled account of the rest of the marriage, which survived in apparent bliss after the torrential affair with Violet subsided, though Vita had several other lovers, most notably the novelist Virginia Woolf. Meek Harold remained sweetly faithful after his fashion, finding solace with male lovers and not being too secretive about it despite an illustrious public career as diplomat, Member of Parliament from 1935-45, and author of 35 books: fiction, biography, history. Vita, equally prolific, was for many years considered a major British writer. Her biography of 500-year-old Knole and of her Spanish dancer grandmother, *Pepita*, are especial delights, as is her gay poetry, some of it appearing in print here for the first time.

Her mother Lady Sackville had once refused a marriage proposal by American president Chester Arthur, and Vita and Harold seemed such exemplary spouses that the boys could not at first believe Lady Sackville's wild but true story.

Half the minor characters are notables in recent British life.

Sexual Conduct: The Social Sources of Human Sexuality, by John Gagnon & William Simon (Aldine, \$8.95, 316 pages) is a bitch of a book, often quite impenetrable, at other times written in a style that while complex is quite fluid. The authors first worked together on the Kinsey team, the Institute for Sex Research. Here they disapprove the Kinsey philosophy in the main, paying tribute to his and to Freud's pioneering work, but wishing to consider sexual behavior as it occurs today without any preconceived notions about innate drives and needs, instincts, or unchang-

ing human character. Their moderately complex exposition of how the behavior of individuals is determined by socially induced "scripts" bogs down hopelessly, and I think needlessly, in a turgid and ill-thought-out set of propositions about the presumed metaphorical underpinning of all human activity. A bit more clarity on what is meant by symbol and simile, metaphor and model would have helped, but the whole construct seems rather unnecessary to what they actually have to say about sex behavior, some of it on the level of newspaper-feature page sociology (the evolution of petting) and some of it a considerable advance on what most "authorities" are writing (their treatment of the homosexual theme).

Because research has been unable to uncover simplistic biogenic rules to explain sexual behavior in all cases, they are in an inordinate hurry, like any good psychologist or sociologist, to conclude that biology has in fact little or nothing to do with the specifics of sexual behavior. It ignores the possibility that what may be indeed learned behavior for some might be physically ordained for others, and quite capricious causally for still others.

They agree with the radical psychologists that the role of psychiatry in creating a new grammar of motives has not always had the happiest of results.

Regarding homosexuality, they follow Hooker and others in saying that little is accomplished by concentrating on the hopeless question of causality, and adding that homosexuals ought not, anymore than heterosexuals, to be discussed as if their sexuality were the only side of their lives. All children suffer some psychic wounds from the process of growing up, and homosexuals, all things considered, tend to adjust remarkably well on the average, though "We do not wish to say that homosexual life does not contain a great potential for demoralization, despair and self-hatred."

They note the wide diversity in "the life cycle of the homosexual," but in spite of all the to-do about a whole new philosophical approach to the whole question of sexual behavior, it does not seem to me that they have in fact introduced a new viewpoint, and as is often the case, their treatment of female homosexuality, while generally liberal sociology, is far from adequate.

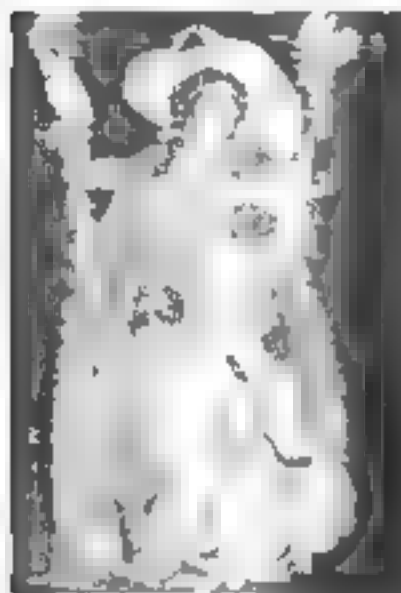
—LYN PEDERSEN



IN TOUCH

with theatre

Dr. Frank N. Furter (Tim Curry), the transsexual transvestite from Transylvania, is quite pleased with his latest creation Ricky (Kim Milford) in the *Rocky Horror Show* (Roxy Theatre, Hugh Harrison—top left). Claudette Colbert and George Gaynes star in *A Community of Two* (Shubert Theatre—top left center). In *The Time of the Cuckoo*, Cesare Danova introduces his son, Peter Hirst, to Jean Stapleton (Ahmanson—top right center). Barbara Rush stars in the bittersweet comedy, *Father's Day* with Gwynne Gillford (left) and Carole Cash (right) (Off Broadway—top right). Charles Pierce, one fantastic man and fabulous women, presents his now-famous version of Jeanette McDonald's "San Francisco" (Dorothy Chandler Pavilion—below left). ACT's production of Chekov's *The Cherry Orchard* features Dana Elcar and Elizabeth Cole (American Conservatory Theatre, William Ganslen—below left center). Elizabeth Huddle (left) and Fredi Oster as two tired chorus girls backstage in *Broadway* (ACT, William Ganslen—below right center). As Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Stacy Keach delivers "To be or not to be" (Mark Taper Forum—below right).



The *Rocky Horror Show* in the Roxy on the Sunset Strip had me turning cartwheels of delight for approximately three quarters of its way and then things began to pall. The moral of this story is that you can only ping so long at a given target. Richard O'Brien serves his music and lyrics slightly better than he does his book. They are consistently top drawer but the satiric thrust of the libretto loses some of its barb well before the finish. The show also sorely needs an intermission. The kidneys would certainly appreciate it, and I personally wouldn't mind one either. The management, however, doesn't feel the need for any. Despite this situation, I spotted several distinguished customers midway heading for the john anyway.

The show is raucous, outrageous and a perfect example of high camp. It has vitality, absolutely gorgeous special effects and brilliant direction by Jim Sharman. The cast is multi-talented, young and eager to please. They are also in possession of some extraordinarily joy-

ous material and they interpret it with style and authority. B. Miller, all of 20 years old, is ideal as Brad, the leading man. To see him in his jockey shorts is one of the most delightful sights any IN TOUCH reader could possibly ask for. He also sings beautifully and he handles himself with charm and skill. Abigale Hanes as Janet Weiss, his girl, is splendid. She has a fine voice and the personality to put it across. Graham Jarvis as the narrator is an inspired piece of casting. He's an extremely funny catalyst and he holds all of the facets of the show together. A very porcine actor by the name of Meat Loaf plays Eddie and Doctor Scott with an intelligent regard for the values of low comedy. This brings me to the subject of Dr. Frank Furter and Rocky. Britain's Tim Curry captivated producer Lou Adler in London and he personally imported him for this production. He is most talented, he can swish with the best of them (although never in Charles Pierce's league) and he has a command of his role that

comes with playing it for a long time. But, alas, he is ultimately monotonous. Every time he comes on stage he enters it exactly as he left it. There are not many strings to his bow. Once he hits the bull's-eye he is content to let it go at that. He isn't too much into variety, coloration or experimentation. He lets his S&M costume do most of the work for him. He struts about on those high heels with the torn mesh hose, his hair a cloudburst canopied over that rose tattoo on his arm, and he doesn't search for any new ways to assault his audience's risibilities. Consequently, he eventually goes stale like the bubbles that finally desert champagne. The first swig is a wow but subsequent flat, warm wine leaves a disturbing after taste. Perhaps director Sharman should have led him down some fresher paths instead of allowing him to fall into the expected rut. Kim Milford as Rocky is simply a matter of taste. If I'm going to have a muscleman Frankenstein created before my very eyes I certainly want him to

unravel with more sex appeal than this shoulder-length, golden-tressed number. He sings well and he can swing himself over the heads of the audience as easily as Tarzan. But he didn't cause my heart to beat one bit faster despite all his body glitter and sequins.

And I should think, if a bodybuilder is called for, there are many more around with far better definition than Mr. Milford can boast. The superb lighting is by Chipmonck; the fantastic sound has been designed by Abe Jacob and the incredibly vulgar costumes are from the drawing board of Sue Blane. Which brings me to another point. I think this show ought to be sold more for its kinky sex than for its horror which is, essentially, nil. Afterwards, I climbed the stairs to B. Miller's dressing room to pay my respects. In the corridor I came across a sign designed solely for the attention of the cast. But it really deserves to see the light of day via this review

"A party is scheduled for the celebration of Annette's Menopause."

* * * *

Stacy Keach's production of *Hamlet* in the Mark Taper is the most peculiar I have ever seen. Elsinore looks more like the San Francisco docks in the opinion of a sophisticated 18-year-old who accompanied me to it. And Mr. Keach as the Melancholy Dane has no vitality, no inspiration, no flesh and blood, no sinew and, alas, no figure for his tights. When he learns the dread news from his father's ghost, he throws an epileptic fit. When he comes to the great lines such as: "Taken all in all I shall not look upon his like again," and "The play's the thing wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king!", he simply throws them away. In the important closet scene with his mother he speaks so softly you can hardly hear what he's saying. Director Gordon Davidson is a man of almost no resources and I consistently dislike his work. Here he introduces an enormous cock at full erection tied around with red ribbons in the Revels scene. This was apparently done for the delectation of Gertrude, but it is a bit much for a Mark Taper audience or for any other for that matter. Peter Nyberg makes a colorless blond Laertes who, upon learning of Ophelia's drowning, registers the phoniest fake grief you ever saw. Jeff Corey has been permitted to

play Polonius like a clown and Edward Albert has been billed as Fortinbras. Mr. Albert is a brilliant young film actor as he ably proved in *Butterflies Are Free*. He starred in *Forty Carats* which wasn't much good and *Killer Bees* on television which was no good at all. But he *starred*. As Fortinbras, we are forced to anticipate him all evening and, finally, he walks briskly across a balcony in Act 3, utters three lines eloquently and disappears. At the end of the play, he strides back, utters three more and the curtain descends. A trick like this is a decided curve to throw at an audience conditioned to movie stars. Backstage, Mr. Albert told me this is his first theatre work and he's simply getting experience. All well and good. But experience in a role of some dimension, if you please. His name is going to sell a lot of tickets and to what end have these particular tickets been purchased?

On the credit side, Kitty Winn, Ellen Burstyn's secretary in *The Exorcist*, makes a fine Ophelia. Her mad scene is beautifully done. Harris Yulin has some heroic moments in the second act as Claudius of the sort I rightfully expected to come from Mr. Keach. Salome Jens is a revelation as Gertrude, bringing fire and authority to the part and more sex appeal than it has heretofore enjoyed. Leon Charles plays the Ghost and the Player King superbly. The first brings him onstage in a billowing sea of dry ice to boom out those sepulchral tones. He has such a sensational timbre to his voice that it simply cannot be disguised later on. But no matter. It is a pleasure to listen to in whatever capacity it is assigned. The incidental music by Lalo Schiffrin is so good you consistently *notice* it and the third act duel has been staged with style and vigor. But the heart of this *Hamlet* is missing. Without a centerpiece you have no *Hamlet* and Mr. Keach is neither right nor ready to play him at this juncture in his career.

* * * *

Something tells me Claudette Colbert is a masochist. Several years ago she blithely decided to do Noel Coward's *South Sea Bubble* and it ran one performance. Jerome Chodorov's *A Community of Two* in the Shubert has already passed that mark but I doubt if it will go very much further. Certainly it will not go to New York unless Miss

Colbert has taken leave of her senses. Apparently she has no built-in gauge of what is good and what is not good for her. This also extends to her choice of leading men. In this case, George Gaynes is a disaster area. He is supposed to be a romantic lead. He looks to be somewhere in his middle sixties and his face and figure have long since gone. I don't know if he ever had any charm to begin with but he certainly lacks even vestigial remains now and he cannot act at all. Miss Colbert's designer, Gerard Blaise, has seen fit to encase her in a black lounging suit with white ruffs at her throat and wrists. This is what she wore in the Thirties for Paramount and I do think the matinee ladies might like a little change of pace. She is pencil thin in it and that remark about her girdle bothering her is absolutely ludicrous. Jerome Chodorov has written a comedy that is not in the least funny and he has directed it in such an offhand manner that all its worst faults are magnified. Instead of pacing the damn thing, he has encouraged Claudette and her company to sit around (there is not too much you can do in an apartment hallway) and exchange large mouthfuls of mirthless conversation. He permits her to swig endless glasses of brandy chug-a-lug fashion and you simply cannot do that with brandy. He brings his people onstage right out of a New York bizzard and they all look like they've been painting a neighbor's house white. He allows Mr. Gaynes to screw a Pullman car chair into a hallway floor and to hang a hurricane lamp there. Even lenient condominium managements will not stand for such shenanigans. Of the cast, other than Miss Colbert, you will probably admire young 25-year-old David Winn most. He is a veteran of countless commercials and is absolutely gorgeous to look at. An IN TOUCH interview is planned for him. Sylvia Daneel is stuck with the boring role of a Laplander (no, there is no typographical error) who arrives on Mr. Gaynes' doorstep to find him in dalliance with Claudette. She utters one line that is worth repeating here: "Sex is almost as good as hot reindeer stew after a walrus hunt."

The plot turns on Miss Colbert's problem of what to do when she locks herself out of her apartment one snowy night. She calls a locksmith and, when

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IN TOUCH

with music



We've already discussed several of them in earlier columns. There was Joni Mitchell's *Court and Spark*, Asylum 7E-1001. Super Streisand has *The Way We Were*, Columbia PC-32801, and there's Bette Midler, by the title artist on Atlantic SD-7270. They are joined by a slightly older LP also on Atlantic, *Killing Me Softly*, by Roberta Flack, the current queen of the blues and a multi-Grammy winner, SD-7271. These ladies are all recording superstars. They've been recently joined in those heady places high on the charts by a handful of others, three of whom have managed to grab and hold onto this elusive piece of stardom, along with a few others who are making very strong bids.

At the top of the made-it list racking up the most rapid sales gains is Helen Reddy, the hottest new female star on record, with her sure, super-hit LP, *Love Song for Jeffery*, Capitol SO-11284. It's a surprisingly easy, light look at the lady and a far cry from the strong stance of her monster-hit, "I Am Woman." It's a simple collection of ballads, named for her baby son and dedicated to her family. The theme is carried through to the inside, foldout cover, presented as a family snapshot album. Her own musical beginnings are examined in the cur-

rent hit single, "Keep On Singing." The whole approach is summed up in this lovely self-dedicated, dedication . . . the best song in the LP's many good numbers.

We have Elektra/Asylum striking fire again. This time with Carly Simon and *Hotcakes*, Elektra 7E-1002, produced by the surefire Richard Perry. It too is a family-type album, with her equally famous husband, James Taylor, dueting on the current hit, "Mockingbird," the latest go-around for this many-times-before song having a brand new life. It's a happy reading here with the scion of the famous publishing family and husband. My personal favorite is "Haven't Got Time for Pain." Ms. Reddy's record is for a recently born baby, while this one seems to be aimed at the impending Taylor child, nicely touched on in "Think I'm Gonna Have a Baby." Here again a child has a strange, enchanting effect. Ms. Simon brings none of the acid-etched sarcasm of her recent big hit, "You're So Vain," but gives us instead a soft-focus, easy, happy presentation.

The final biggie is a reemerging lady, Aretha Franklin. Her Atlantic album, *Let Me In Your Life*, SD-7292, captures all her long-ago, then-fresh *joie de vivre*

that was so evident in all her early work for the label—"Respect" and "A Natural Woman," for example. Aretha's problem in her more recent records is that she seemed too laid-back. This one returns her to the head of that sassy-class that made her a star. It's proved very rewarding, too, with two smash-hit singles from this LP—her first in a while "Ain't Nothing Like the Real Thing" and the current, spectacular "Until You Come Back To Me (That's What I'm Going to Do)." There's a whole gaggle of greats still left to enjoy, "A Song For You" (a hit waiting to happen) and that oldie-oldie, "The Masquerade Is Over." It all redefines Ms. Franklin as a true superstar.

For a while it looked as if Diana Ross, on the strength of her performance in the film, *Lady Sings the Blues* and the follow-up sound track a bum plus the overwhelming success of the haunting recording *Touch Me In The Morning*, first as a very big single and then a successful LP, would vault her to not only the ranks of superstar but win her the title, Queen of Soul, displacing Roberta Flack, who in her turn displaced Aretha Franklin. Alas, finding a follow-up to such as "Touch Me" and recapturing Ms. Ross' shattering per-

formance would be very difficult. Too difficult as it turns out. The new LP, *The Last Time I Saw Him*, Motown M 812 V-1 does not complete the vaulting. It is great fun, ricky-ticky vaudeville zipping. It must have seemed like a great idea on paper, as a follow-up. It just doesn't turn the necessary super-trick and Ms. Ross remains merely a recording star.

The heir-apparent to that crown of the Queen of Soul has, instead, sneaked up through the ranks. Gladys Knight with her back-up group, The Pips, had a long association with a label that produced nothing for them except a long string of hits and lots and lots of money. Still that magic spark that would elevate her even to the rank of star was missing. The group's next step was unthinkable in an industry where artist-label relations and that undefinable, all-important hit sound that they both strive for, are nearly intangible things. At the very height of their selling power they decided to switch labels. Instead of a waster, the Buddah LP, *Imagination* (BDS-5141), produced two hit singles, a covey of Grammys and not merely star status but, if they're able to hold the pace for a follow-up, superstar status. This superb LP is filtered through the voice of Ms. Knight . . . a voice the color and texture of dark, wild honey . . . and is absolutely brilliant. Even the lesser songs are knockouts, while the best ones, including one of those big hits, "Midnight Train to Georgia," achieve musical greatness. Its sum and total effect is so great that it gives Gladys Knight claim to at least half the crown now claimed by Ms. Flack, and, indeed may even succeed in bringing forth the rallying cry, "Long Live the New Soul Queen!"

The Pointer Sisters are assured of superstardom. They've already had one big hit single, "Yes We Can," from their smashing debut LP. Now they've totally outdone themselves with the second, *That's A Plenty* (Blue Thumb, BST-6009). They have achieved the impossible in both albums by turning camp into real art. There's nothing these chicks can't do: recreating, accurately and with affection, an entire era; feeling equally at home in all forms of music, rock or pop or jazz or . . . ; sending up the entire country and western market with "Fairytale," but gently with feel-

ing; even reviving that dead art, scat-singing. The whole album is a treat from the opening old, old barber-shop number, "Bangin' On The Pipes," which dissolves infectiously into the Broadway show-tune, "Steam Heat," right on through the old R&B number, "Salt Peanuts," never once losing its momentum and drive right up to the very end. There are a couple of interesting stops along the way for "Little Pony" (every note true to Lambert, Hendrix and Ross) and the old, bittersweet "Black Coffee." This album gives them a broader scope than the first and shows an even deeper-running talent—if anyone who's heard the other LP thought that possible. There's a gold-vein of songs running its full length. Pick one, any one, and there's another smash.

Maria Maulder with the LP named after her on Reprise (MS-2148) has a current offbeat hit in the album's biggest and best song, "Midnight At The Oasis." I'd only thought of it as a novelty item until I heard this entire record. It's sensational! Its success only proves that old point, a label can achieve, with care and patience, a true hit. It's nearly a year old and is just now inching its way up the A.M. radio's charts to smash status. The album is following suit. What's more important is the lady's making a strong bid for superstardom . . . underdog is a good position to play from.

To tag a complete unknown as a certain bet for superstardom is very risky, especially since it's the listening and buying audience who create such stars. I'll just suggest that such a fate is in store for Maggie Bell. Her new LP, *Queen of the Night* (Atlantic SD-7293) successfully introduces this English star—regarded there as a cross between Bette Midler and Janis Joplin—to us here in the States. There's no question that she's loaded with both power and talent, heard in both the title song and the Ringo Starr hit, "Oh, My My." You can be sure she's hit on the correct label. Atlantic has the biggest and best female stars en masse of any label. What the hell, I will go out on a limb, all these facts under consideration, and predict she'll be the biggest English musical import since the Beatles!

ON THE FLIP SIDE:

Any superstar in this recording business who can remain such on just sheer

staying power is a phenomenon. This phenomenon's name is Jackie De Shannon. With nothing but two singles in as many years that weren't even smash hits, she still firmly remains a great. It seems she reached the point where her name alone will get any new side she cuts on the air, a thing most other singers can only dream about. She completes that lineup of female superstars on Atlantic. She began her career in the early Fifties and not one of the singers listed on the charts with her then, when the first hit "Every Time That You Walk in the Room" broke, have had a song near those charts in years. In fact, most of them have long since left the business. After being mostly wasted in her earlier, long association with Liberty, who pegged her, on strength of those first hits, as a breathy little girl—a la "What the World Needs Now Is Love" and "Put a Little Love in Your Heart." So, because she has had a continuing struggle to break out of that mold and try the gospel shout she was brought up with and did so well, she finally left to try another label for one LP but they blew it completely. Now, Atlantic realizes they have an incredible talent on their hands . . . perhaps too much of a talent. If she has a problem at all, it's one of vocal identity. She can do anything, that black-flavored, gospel shout; pop-songs with ease; rock, and even had a well-mounted class nightclub act. Atlantic let her follow her own musical paths while offering only slight, careful, guidance and her first LP for them is the best she's ever done, Jackie (SD-7231). The association with an understanding label has firmed up that right-on talent as she looks to continue her joyous and joyful kinship with music as long as she cares to keep it going.

A FLIP SIDE P.S.

A little gossip: Keep an eye on Cher, a brilliant talent with a superb voice, who's been a bit held back by past associations but is shedding them all. She's now David Geffen's constant companion and he's the man who's the genius behind that hottest new label around, Asylum. Cher has long since achieved the superstar placement but a little trip down this label's gold-lined aisle could be the start of a climb into the superstratosphere of Legendary Performer.

—HUGH HARRISON

IN TOUCH

dines out

You say you're lonely, and you should eat something . . . well, eat your heart out at Duke's, 8585 Santa Monica Blvd. Coffee shop to the blue and white Tropicana Motel, it's all eggs and onions, bagels and lox and biggy, juicy burgers grilled on sourdough. Spinach, spices, fresh fruit and juices, Canadian bacon, mushrooms and sour cream spot the menu. Extensive breakfasts, grilled and cold sandwiches and skillet-meals, plus a "daily special."

The predominantly "male" crowd is tight, loose, sparkling and well-trimmed . . . and that's just their clothes! A Mom (lots of quippy waitresses) and Pop (Duke wants you should enjoy) type of eatery that is much too scarce in this town. Cash on delivery—bring \$3. Call for takeout and home/office deliveries.

Duke's
8585 Santa Monica Blvd.
Mon.-Fri. 6AM to 8PM/Till 5PM on Sat.
652-5720 or 652-7949

Viktor Benes Continental Pastries is located on West 3rd Street near Robertson Blvd., and if you can only take a coffee break, take one here. Coffee and Danish is 50 cents and the rest is up to you. Mousse St. Cloud, five-layer tortes, Biarritz roll, croissants, seeded rings, banana chocolate squares, strawberry macaroon layers, Babas and Savarins and the Supreme Black Forest Log (birthday, anyone?)

Viktor Benes is currently managed by Gerth, a warm-hearted Swede, who for four years has put in his 60 hours a week as "pastryman." He toured me through the smallish kitchen during the cookie shift. Butter, eggs (200 pounds/week 2,600), quarts of "top" cream, liquors, rum, brandy. South American chocolate, poppy and sesame seeds, honey, etc., abound. Their prices are so close to your commercial packaged neighborhood market items, you may want to change your ways. Phone orders taken for routine and special occasions. Ask about the daily "special," but ask early.

Viktor Benes Continental Pastries
8718 West 3rd Street
Daily: 7AM to 6PM
276-0488

South of the border, "macho" means one thing, but in Westwood Village Macho's literally means fine Mexican cuisine in a civilized setting. Whether you refer to the room and the decor, the variety of items on the wooden-encased menu, or the attractiveness and excellence of your selections—all the people responsible for Macho's have achieved their responsibilities, and in the best of tastes. Here is Mexican decor that verges on the "educational" — from Mexican Flag and original ¾-inch macrame dividers to printed rice and bean burlap bags for the booth covers. The menu is 75 per cent familiar fare with touches, i.e., soup of the day, Caesar salad, and that "roasted chili" flavor in the enchilada sauce, up to "camarones and pollo mole," and topped with "house" creations. Such is the "Mexican Pizza"—a layer of heated "homemade" corn tostadas, layered with hot refries and cold sour cream, topped with green chili strips, sliced black olives and cold peeled tomato chunks. A magnificent lunch for one, or the salad course for three. I enjoyed the description of their shrimp/chicken entree, and devoured a "dessert quesadilla." This creation has a cheese-dough tortilla base with cinnamon sugar and topped with lime sherbet (Mexican cannelloni?). The "waiting" bar can meet all demands and there's a balcony for twosomes. I'm indebted to Bill M. for my intro to Macho's, and to Ernesto, the assistant manager, for the taste tour. Weekdays is collegiate and Friday through Sunday add adults listening to the "house trio" from 8PM on. Ram \$5 into your cartridge belt and forget the Alamo here. Reservations for 6 or more. Cards: AE/BA/MC.

Macho's
939 Broxton Ave., Westwood Village
Daily: 11:30AM to 1AM

Whenever I hear, "There's a great Italian restaurant," I have visions of welded spaghetti with either one mouthful of acidic red glue on top or awash in red broth. Looking away, you see your friend coming up underneath a soggy flap of burnt-edged pizza covered in molten, mouth-searing cheese. I'm for staying at home and sucking on a bouillon cube. Yet just about everyone has

people over for spaghetti dinners, so it must be believed that they are inexpensive (false) and easy to prepare (double-false). Stirring a ragu kettle for four hours is not my idea of a love affair. If you've agreed with me so far . . . let me tell ya about Bruno's. For nineteen years they have been located at 3838 Centinela Ave., just south of Venice Blvd.

Reasons to go: Antipasto—certainly your "salad" course, "Mushrooms alla Primavera"—spicy juices trapped in thin butter-brown crusts and topped with lemon and cheese. Minestrone—"back of the stove," and thick, breaded veal with cheese, or lemons, or Marsala peppers, maybe sautéed Trout or Sweetbreads with Duchess potatoes. Try "stuffed stocking"—ricotta, mozzarella and romano come between salami and ham, all rolled in Neopolitan dough and oven gold. With the meat dishes try "pasta with Pesto"—a ground trio of fresh basil, nuts and garlic with oil, a green ambrosia that puts red sauce to slight shame. Brodo (broth), salad and a varied pastry tray arrives with dinner. Bring \$6 each.

Nineteen years mean something for everyone and with 17 pizzas to choose from, kids of all ages can enjoy Bruno's. (Note: "La Dolce Pizza"—sweet dough, bubbly with sugar, nuts and fresh fruit apricot is yum!) Full bar service at tables. Extensive, quality Italian wines (the ones the French drink) and Michelob on draught.

Now to your room(s): a moss-covered "weeping" water wall patio (lunch), two medium and one very large banquet rooms, a "very" private Venetian dining chamber for 20 where only antique gold and silver service is used, that marble bar alla "Excelsior" with a multi-flame lamp that defies description, two smaller alcoves, and the main public room. This three-story chapel/theatre/taverna requires many visits to fully realize. Ask the congenial house manager for the "tour"—including the MGM "Frankly-my-dear-I-don't-give-a-damn" mirror in the foyer. Ample parking lots. Cards: MC/BA. Reservations: Eight or more.

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—BILL ARSENEAUX

special report - music

SILVERHEAD

Over Sixteen and Really Savaged

by Hugh Harrison
with photos by the author

Photo by Suzan Carson



To be there at the start—the very beginnings of a super-group is really breathtaking. The snap-crackle-pop electrical sparks that fly during these early super-origins are maxi-measured in multi-volts. It's an experience that can never adequately be described or even written about. It's an experience that must be experienced.

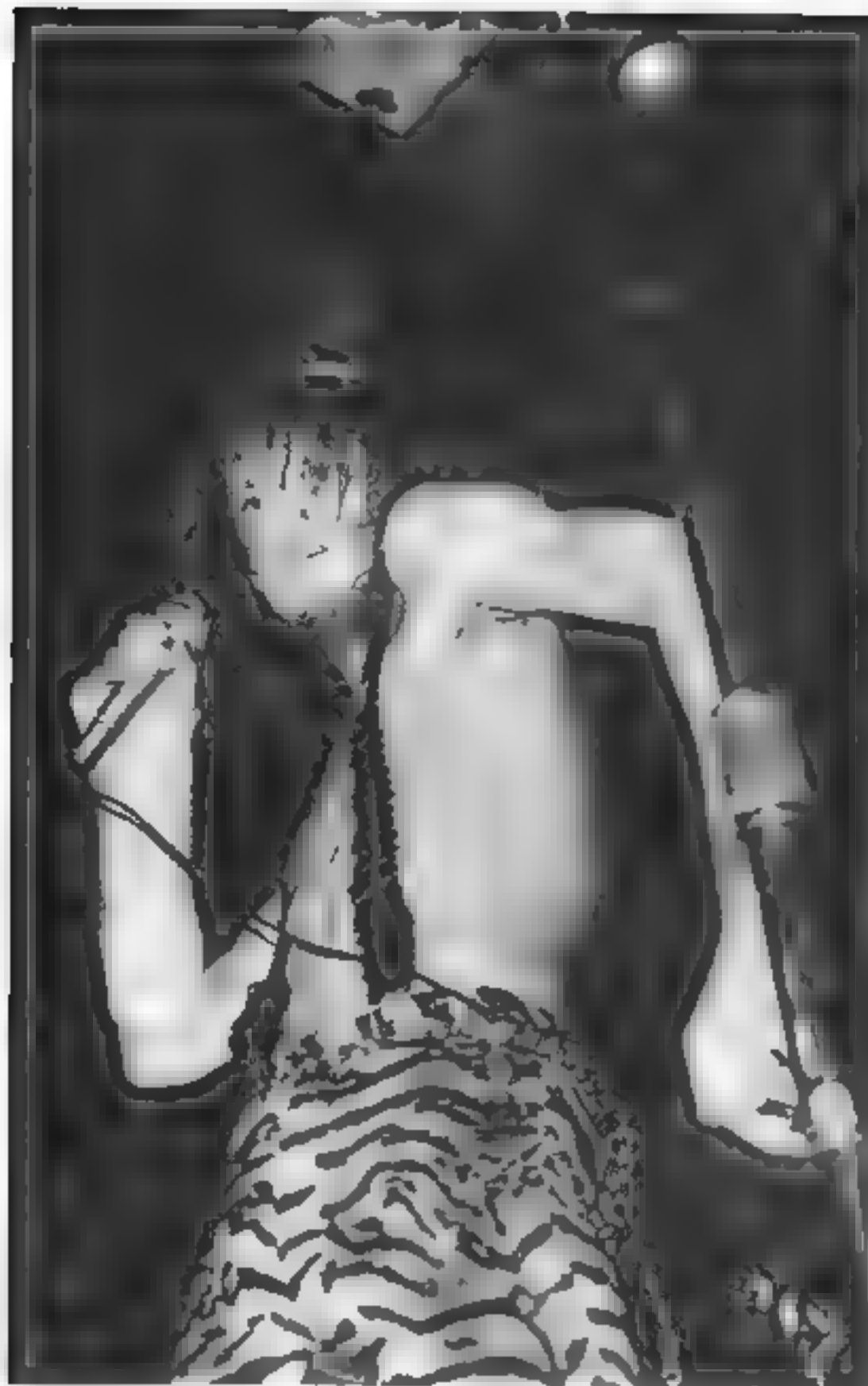
That's the way it was with MCA's new recording group, Silverhead. This energy spark is all plugged into the group's lead singer, Michael Des Barres. The energy oozes out of his very pores, setting fires of greatness burning hot and bright in the entire group. Des Barres is the finite incarnation of all the current multi-crossover sex symbolism. He out-Jaggers Jagger; over-Preseys Elvis and even Bowies beyond David. Either by plan or design Michael Des Barres has managed to run up a sexual total of all these super-groupers and make it all work. His gaunt, haunting face, calling up images of a handsomer Mick Jagger, as huge eyes that quickly burn holes in your pretenses. A wild shock of flying blond hair macramés this proud, flaunting head with his perfectly matched sinewy body. In a word, he's a star, of the first caliber.

A big part of the current musical scene isn't so much the music as the posing by the groups during the in-person performances. Michael has it all . . . standing with his body slightly askew; moving sensuously, like a snake in heat; jutting upthrusting, phallic arm movements or flipping across stage with his bouncy, bouncy walk. It seems to fall to him quite naturally, all this posing, since most of his early years in England, where he was born and raised were spent as an actor up until about only a year ago. During our talks, he skipped quickly over all these early years because he's now immersed himself in a total dedication to music and it's the only thing in his life. Music is by no means a new experience to him, though. He grew up in a musical/show-business atmosphere. His mother was a well-known jazz singer in England, an idea that must have virtually destroyed the very old, well-respected, high-born Des Barres family. Surely Michael, who's by rights the Marquis Des Barres,

must be pulling down the last vestiges of the ragged remains of the family's pomp and circumstance. One of his most vivid memories of these growing-up years were his baptism in blues by the black musicians who backed up his mother's performances. To this day those early learned blues, not only from the musicians, but also from their carefully hoarded and shared old recordings of Bessie Smith and Billie Holiday, are recalled with reverence and use by his musical soul's inner-ear. His flashy-trashy, glitter dripping comes to him quite naturally, too. Michael's mother performed in the obligatory-for-the-time slit-skirt and garter.

The group's very early formations, as opposed to the super-beginnings, a bit later, all occurred in England. This formation was done all strictly by design. Michael Des Barres had decided, quite correctly as it turns out, that his future lay in music—rock music. He had decided, in that straightforward, no-nonsense, I-want-to-make-it manner, that he wanted to form a band. For him it was so simple he wrote a few songs, auditioned some musicians and . . . Silverhead. Don't be deceived, it only sounds simple, unless you're Michael Des Barres.

The first member of the new, then unnamed group was Rook Davis, who's the lead guitarist and backup singer. He'd been a member of an early David Bowie backup group, The Riot Squad. It proved to be a perfect beginning for this taste-me, smell-me, feel-me group that Des Barres not only envisioned but eventually got with the addition of Robbie Blunt, slide guitarist, with his teddy-boy rough manner; Nigel Harrison, the little-boy pretty bass guitarist and Pete Thompson of the Grateful Dead the Pig-Pen-like drummer. Every possible base was not only touched but landed on with a firm footing. It was one rainy afternoon, waiting at a bus stop to go to a late recording session that the name flashed into Des Barres' head and, at last, Silverhead was truly born. From the start the single most important aspect of the group was musicianship. Michael saw to that. His well-trained ear was quick to catch and hold that particular musical flavoring he was searching for.



Their early emergence in their home country, steeped in the rock-and-rouge vogue begun by Bowie and now populated by countless semi-musicians in semi-drag, was sensational. This was something different, these boys were truly musicians in every sense of the word. Beneath all the sequins and shine, with them at least, was music . . . hard, gritty, real music. It took only a few personal appearances to vault them to stardom. Record offers poured in, but Des Barres held out until he felt they were really ready. What he wanted for the first LP was really a monster. Their first exposure in this country was as the second-billed group on the concert circuit with the brand new surely-hot, surely-hit group (which never took place), Uriah Heep. As the second billed act, Silverhead merrily skipped away with all the reviews and acclaim, as the major group merely lived neatly up to its name, because Uriah it was. Soon a whole bevy of glowing groupies, male and female, were swarming around Des Barres and company. They knew! A super-group was born.

The care and nurturing of such a group is—if you have a huge record company behind you to nudge, push, shove and clear the way—simple. These guys had one of the very best, MCA, who's patient building of stars is legendary. First off, there came that all-important first solo appearance. This should be done at some small, hip, reputation-promoting rock club. The Whiskey-A-Go-Go fitted the bill nicely. The gig was set up and they were on the way. On that opening night anyone could tell that the group had officially arrived. Absolutely everybody was there. The all-important super-groupies, whose appearance can make or break a group, came in droves. The group didn't have a worry. Sprinkled glitteringly through the crowd were Cynthia Plaster-Caster (of the plaster-casting infamy), Tinkerbell (whom you'll recall from an earlier interview with IN TOUCH) and Chuck Starr (of Rodney's Disco fame with his startling, foot-tal platform shoes). Present were the *de rigueur*, drop-in musicians from other famous groups. Strangely enough the crowd also included many record company executives who ordinarily wouldn't be caught dead in the Whiskey (with good reason you'd understand if you'd ever been there).

The performance was nothing short of sensational. Following a quick series of color slides—of the group and the just-now-shot cover of the soon to be finished LP, "Sixteen and Savaged"—on the movie screens covering the Whiskey's walls, to tease and whet the jam-packed little club's audience, out burst Silverhead. Michael Des Barres' first appearance was greeted with thunderous applause and deafening screams. He paused, hands on hips, pulled himself up to his full height and cut through this din of greeting with a cold, haughty stare, not moving an inch until it died down. Then, and only then, did he suddenly, and without warning, unleash all that high-voltage power on the audience with the first number, the group's hit, "Rock and Roll Band." It was the start of an hour of power. One sure way to gauge a group's impact is to watch the audience. This club's dance-happy audience didn't move a foot to do a step. The group caught and held them in some glittering, acrylic suspension. Des Barres caught up all the usually danced away energy with his own performance, neatly encased it in his own crackling energy and threw it back at them in handfuls. The crowd, stunned, lapped it all up. He finally and totally destroyed them by circling every outer-limit other groups impose on themselves and only barely touch. The crossover dress is only a prelude to the crossover ambiguous sexual appeal. Most other biggies remain



smirkingly silent as to their fore-and-aft sex appeal. Des Barres shouts it, shakes it, underlines and restates it . . . like that firm mouth-to-mouth kiss he planted on one of his leather-jacketed male fans. The little gig at the Whiskey did its job well and the super-start was started.

Later during the recording session it was visually, at least, a very different group. All the flashy-dashy, non-musical excesses, although pure magic and pure theatrics, done purely for those in-performance audiences, were missing. No matter how glamorous the final results of such a recording session, there is little or no glamor in the recording studio itself. The studio is a workroom in every sense of the word. There are well-filled ashtrays and litters of empty beer cans all presided over by the bored faces of the engineers and technicians, a forever look they seem to have been born with. Their faces seem to tell you that no matter how far-out these English lads are, they've seen it all before. This pose is quickly ripped away as Michael Des Barres surges to life in front of the mike. Those bored faces snap forward in rapt concentration. He thrusts his arm, abruptly, high in the air like some spangle-encrusted phallus. It is one of the poses he uses in public performance but here it seems to be pulling the music sharply and swiftly from his body and very being.

During a brief break in the session to listen to playbacks of what's been done, a wild-haired, sweat-glistening Des Barres saunters over. Our conversation is as quick and brief as his answers. There seems to be no time here for anything except what he's supposed to do—work. He has strong opinions and doesn't mind discussing them. One thing that irritates him is that most people he's come across don't think performing artists should express opinions or don't have the intelligence to discuss them. Mostly it's all about the group and the pending tour. He loves audiences and considers them only huge mirrors of himself

and the whole glam-rock movement. Two special favorites with him are those in Tokyo and New York. Still, I'm left with the feeling that what he says, he says best with his music, as it should be with all truly gifted artists.

When the LP, "Sixteen and Savaged," is finally finished and released, it certainly lived up to the wishes of the group. It's indeed a monster record. "Hello, New York," an odd greeting to our country, is already a smash in Japan (where they are already revered as a super-group). "Bright Light" and "Heavy Hammer" (!) are equally as good, while "Cartoon Princess" neatly boxes in all groupies. Still, it's the title song, "Sixteen and Savaged," a plaintive cry for all our lost, unhappy youth that finally, truly achieves pop art in its highest musical form. What's doubly amazing about the album is that it works as a whole, even with so many great cuts that stand individually on their own. Work it does. It's light years ahead of anything done by a new group in many, many years.

The super-arrival is finally redefined and finished with the group's recent appearance at the Santa Monica Civic with the New York Dolls, the great New York group. The original plan was to have Silverhead second-billed again, like in the Uriah Heep concerts. When the ticket demands started pouring in on the strength of the Silverhead name, those plans were quickly changed, and they were elevated to co-starring billing, equal with The Dolls. *Deja vu*. They again walked off with the concert and the reviews. One of the concert's promoters even ruefully admitted that the wrong group had closed the show. It's a wrong that's been quickly righted and the group is off on a round-the-world tour on the strength of their own name. Prepare yourselves. They'll be back in Los Angeles in a little less than a year and even our jaded city may never recover from this next big thing in rock, very upfront and plugged firmly into ambi-sex.

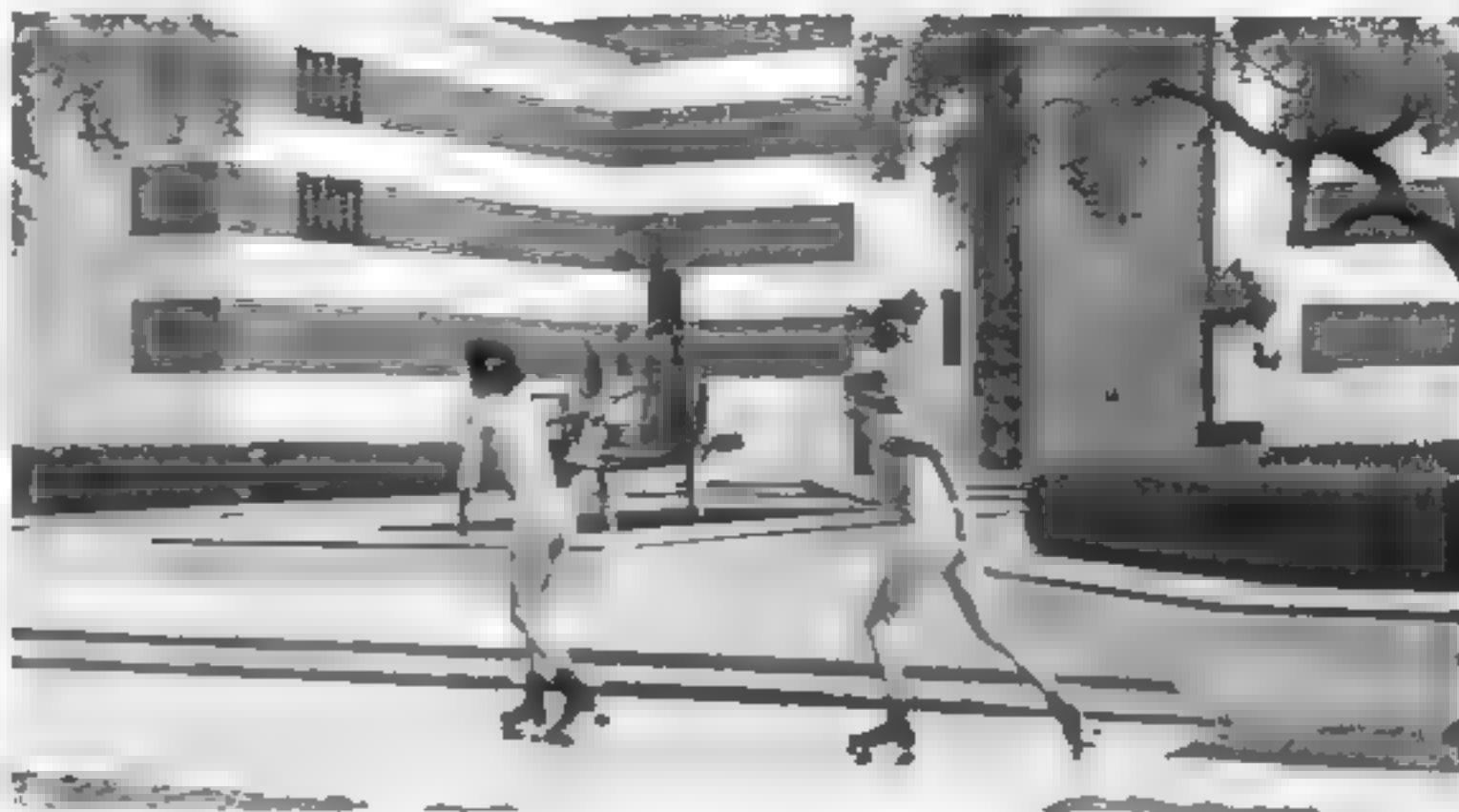




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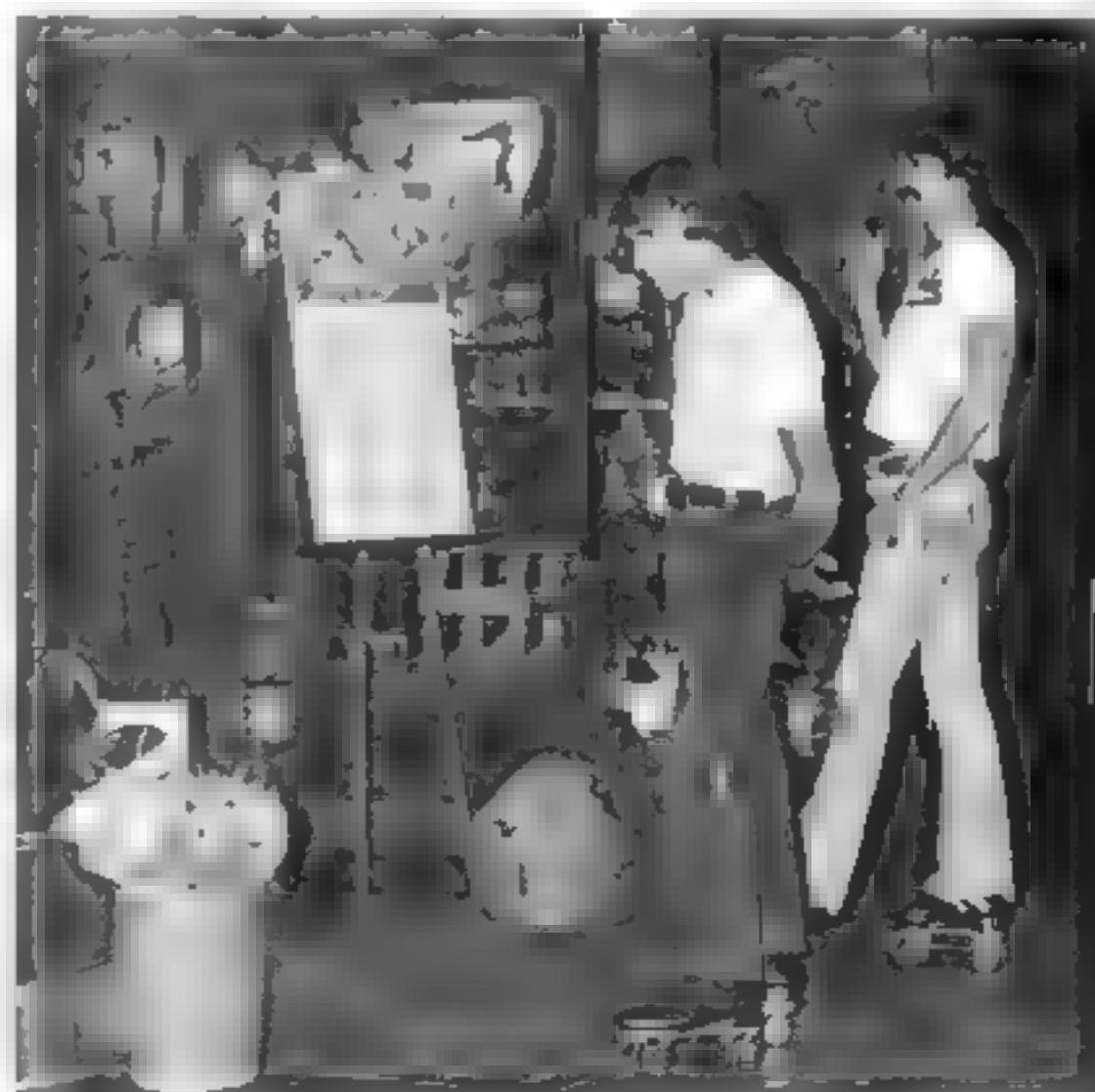
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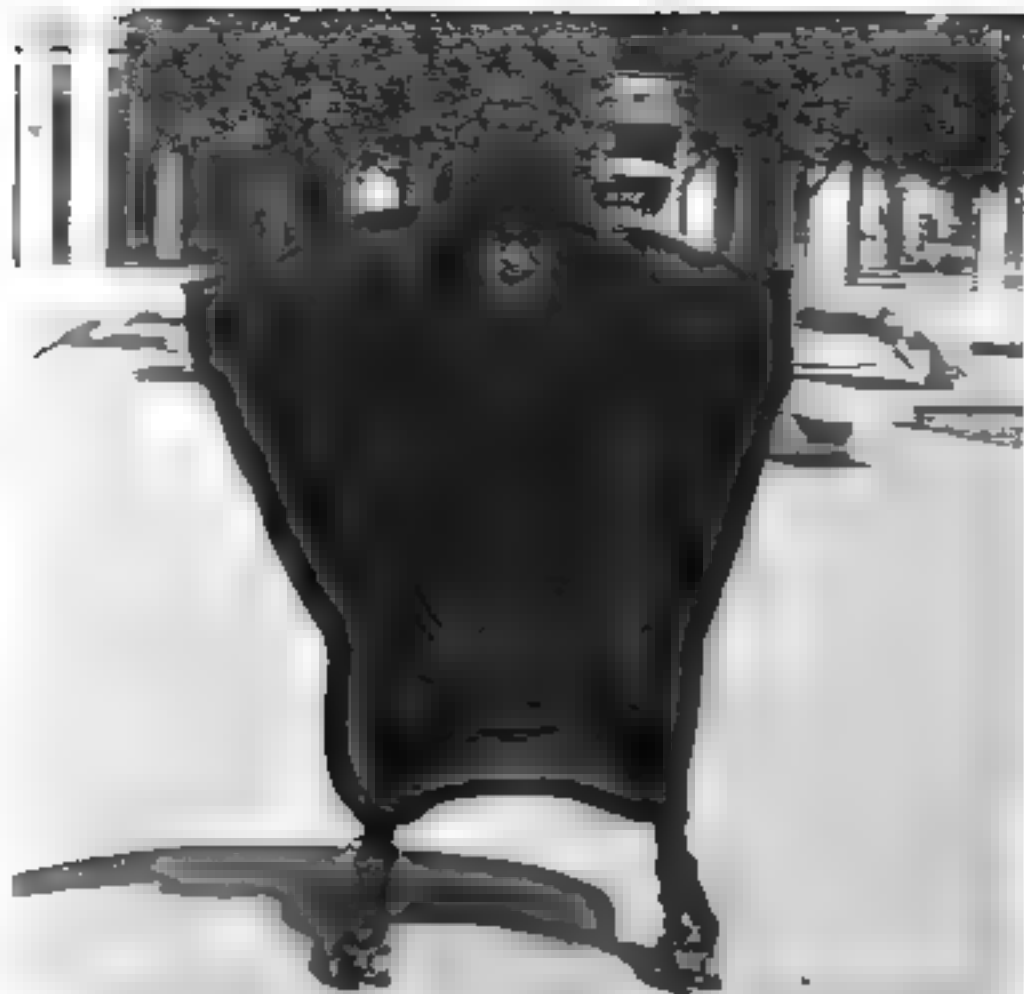
SKATING AWAY THE DAY



Dawn in Los Angeles is lovely ... so I've been told. Frankly, I can't see at that hour of the morning, so I wouldn't swear to it, even though I was there when Mark and Jay began roller-skating their way across the city. You see, for their first little adventure the two lads had decided to join on that current vogue so popular now in the seats of learning of this nation—streaking. Now, if you don't know what streaking is by this time you either can't read, don't own a television set, have been unconscious for the past year, or all of the above. You know, it's really unfortunate that all you ever see in the seats of learning are the streaker's seats. Seldom, if ever, do television cameramen or newspaper photographers show streaking laps.

We had decided to start at dawn so as to attract as little attention as possible from such people as school officials as well as Chief Davis and his cohorts. Aware that there have been no arrests for streaking at any school in the country, we still didn't want to be the first to break that precedent. We, the great respecters of tradition that we are, chose the hallowed grounds of the University of Southern California, because that's where it all began. Jay and Mark streaked on exactly the same spot where that original brave, cold soul streaked before us. In spite of the precaution, the guys did manage to attract a small crowd of onlookers, a few of whom even actually watched Jay and Mark were mostly just ignored. I never thought I'd live to see the day. I'm afraid if you're out to attract attention, streaking even on





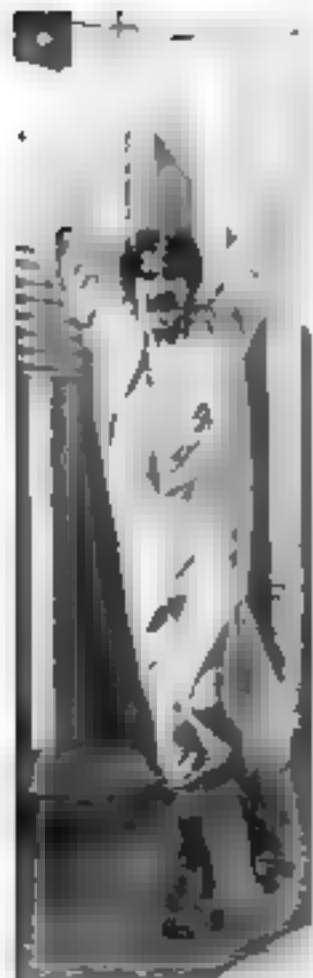
roller skates won't do it. All in all, my conclusion is that USC has ODed on streaking.

Then, it was onward to better things. Better things in this case being shopping on skates, at the lush, plush new Arco underground shopping mall in downtown Los Angeles. After a quick stop to change ... well ... after a quick stop to put on clothes, Mark and Jay began their little roller/shopping spree. Getting out of a car on roller skates is a bit weird looking, I have to admit. The boys had the entire population of the parking lot looking on in amazement. They bravely met each glazed look and gasping sound, rolling right along. If any one of those fine, posturing businessmen would have gotten it together, instead of being just freaked-out, they might have realized that skates might be the answer to the gas crisis. Pomposity is unhappily a product of prosperity and they were so busy being shocked that the idea didn't occur to them. Oh, well. Anyway, before you

could say Merrill, Lynch, Pierce, Fenner and Smith, they were skating down the halls of Arco, past several charming little shops. One little plant shop was especially lovely. Then, it was down the escalator and back up again. This was a bit tricky but our stalwart heroes, fleet of foot ... er ... skate and mind, came through with flying colors, albeit, very carefully. That little shopping trip proved to be lots of fun, interesting and even profitable ... at least for the shops displaying all those irresistible goodies.

Having funkied it at the Arco Plaza in old jeans and torn tee-shirts, a quick change into something more sedate might seem to have been the order of the day for skating around the scenic Music Center, especially during the theatre break. It might have been for a less adventuresome pair. Fortunately the boy's friskier heads prevailed and they opted for the latest California clothes craze, caftans. The combination, roller skates and caf-





tans, couldn't miss! The crowd was a bit sparse. Audiences, it seems, tend mostly to stay inside the theatre during breaks. Mark and Jay did draw a small crowd of tourists along with several late-lunching brown-baggers. Mark was outfitted in a fetching, semi-transparent black job, complete with hood, from Lew Mangam in New York. He was only slightly upset by the sheer sheerness of the caftan ("You can see my . . . all of me . . . right through this thing!"). However, Jay was very convincing and Mark's arm may even eventually recover. Soon Mark was caught up in the fun. He started by doing a few Batman poses, switching to early Dracula and even tried a few incantations! Jay, in raw muslin with matching underneath drawstring slacks from My Mother Lives in Cincinnati, of Laguna Beach, was having no problems . . . just a great time

Both young men were soon whizzing and zipping around past the open-mouthed lunchers whose sandwiches, half-eaten, were poised halfway to their half-opened mouths. Fun, however, being what it is and catching, soon brought all the watchers to get right into the swing of things. Everyone was soon laughing and urging Mark and Jay on with cries of: "More . . . more!" and "What the hell's goin' on here!" and other encouraging things like that. In the midst of all this happy confusion we were scurrying around, busily taking pictures of the boys while the tourists were scurrying around, busily taking pictures of us taking pictures of the boys. Finally, both lunch and intermission were over, it was time to move on.

Our next scheduled stop was Glen's Baths in North Hollywood, one of Los Angeles' most popular watering holes. On the way we got this really far-out idea! Why not try skating down the freeway? Now we could really demonstrate our feelings about the energy shortage! To class it up a bit and help reassure any of the more conservative types, the guys changed into business suits and ties. We'd just pulled over to begin our little save-the-fuel lesson when this car pulled up behind us, all done up in chic black and white with two cunning little red lights on the roof going blip-blip-blip. Out jumped this friendly type and at great and careful lengths explained to us why we simply could not skate down the freeway. We explained, also at great and careful lengths, our plan and pointed out that the posted sign forbade only pedestrians, bicycles and motor-driven bikes. I don't think we got through to him. We decided not to press the matter. They can become tacky when riled.

So, without further ado, it was on to Glen's. Since Mark and Jay had gone to all the trouble to get into those natty suits, they figured it could be great fun to skate up and down the halls of the tubs in them. "Why, it would be . . . streaking in a steam-bath!" Fun it was but that kind of get-up just doesn't hold up too well in that humidity. They soon decided to slip into something more comfortable. For Jay it was another caftan, silver-glimmer-threaded blue, and Mark had a long, flowing maroon lounging robe. Both are from That Look here in Hollywood. The first stop was the sundeck where they found a few uses for this traditional part of the tubs. They staged a two-man roller derby. After this strenuous exercise, the caftans were shucked for something much more comfortable and much more familiar, towels . . . by Cannon. Somewhere along the way these came off too, giving way to the most comfortable thing of all, skin. The blond bod is by Mark, the dark one by Jay. They went all around doing just everything. There's so much to choose from in Glen's great facilities. First the guys shot a little pool on



skates—really insane. This was followed by a trip to the TV room. They even started to try the steam-room, but bearing in mind they would catch their wheels in the slats, thought better of it. Mark and Jay topped it all off with a trip to the showers . . . very carefully! Showering on skates is . . . well . . . what more can be said

The final stop of the day was a gay skating party in Orange County which is really all the way across town. Jay and Mark had decided that a visit was a must. After all, they'd skated in all those other far-out places, so what could be better than to end their little adventure at a real roller-skating rink? This was the first chance they'd had to show off their skating skills as it's a little hard to do a flashy turn on an escalator. Though spending an entire day on skates had its effects on the energy level, whose series of daring skate tricks was performed—crossovers, backward skating, whirls, dips and turns. A little of this exhaustive exuberance went a long way, though, especially after such a long day as this. So, after a few last laps around the rink, it was home.



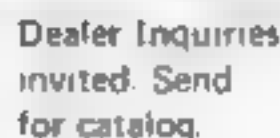
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IN TOUCH at home

"Welcome as the flowers in May." That's a nice way to make any guest feel, and the place to begin is right at the old front door . . . with a door that is interesting, inviting and "you."

Doors really have much more potential as decorative fixtures than you may ever have realized. Aside from shutting out the night air and giving callers something on which to knock, they can lend much character and charm to your home. Whether you prefer something that blends with the overall style of your house or a sharp contrast, your door should be more special than a mere hole in the wall.

Of course, one of the easiest and quickest ways to change it is with paint or paint and antiquing. Whether you choose a bright yellow or blue (or both), a Chinese red, or perhaps a black with gold trim, it's a relatively simple way to give a new "hello" to your next visitor.

If you do decide to paint, make sure the surface you are working on is clean and dust-free. If the surface requires sanding, a fine-grained sandpaper is best or, in some cases, steel wool. (Hand sanding is much easier if you use a block of wood and wrap the sandpaper around it. Better still is an old paint roller cover. Try it; you'll be surprised.)

If your door is already painted and you'd like to change it to a wood tone, try antiquing it. There are numerous brands available on the market, and they all work about the same: paint, sand lightly, wipe on glaze, let it dry and then varnish for durability. The antiqués do come in wood tones now as well as in colors. (And if you do decide on Chinese red, a brass knocker—oriental design, of course—is a perfect finishing touch.)

If you yearn for greater self-expression, create your own design with stripes, lines or abstracts. A friend once painted his house number vertically on the door in large characters a foot and a half high. Not something I would want to live with but fun for a change. It might do your ego a world of good to do the same sort of thing with your name. For a mod look you might choose silver paint or silver leaf. (There

is such a thing though not often seen.) Gold leaf is always a knockout. Ask your paint store for assistance if you're in doubt about applying "leaf."

To add dimension and depth to a plain flat door surface, most hardware stores and lumber yards now carry decorative plaques of wood or plastic which can be glued to the door. A similar effect—and possibly more versatile—can be achieved through the use of ornamental moulding arranged in your own design. And, of course, you can always use a combination of the two such as large squares outlined with moulding and centered with a plaque.

One idea we thought rather smashing was that of re-surfacing a door with copper. You can buy it in sheets large enough to cover a door. It is fairly expensive and will need to be polished but WOW!

Applying the sheeting would be fairly easy. Lay the door flat with the copper on top. Use two clamps (or two friends) to hold it firmly top and bottom while you bend the edges all around and tack them tightly at one-inch intervals. Use a sharp utility knife or drill and saw blade (depending on the thickness of the copper) to open the metal for replacing hardware or adding new fixtures.

You can avoid some of the polish work if you paint or spray the copper with a good quality clear lacquer. That will preserve the finish and enable it to retain its beautiful luster for a long time.

The sparkle and brilliance of colored or stained glass is a real asset wherever used. If you have glass in your front door, it is a simple matter to exchange a panel or panels for something with color.

If your door is solid, the task of creating a colored window is, of course, more difficult but nevertheless rewarding. By cutting a hole in the door with a power saw, you can mount a nice piece of stained glass. Be sure to use a good caulking to seal all cracks and remember to saw the opening ¼-inch larger than the glass to allow for facing, moulding, and so forth. Use finishing nails to secure moulding around the glass on the

inside and outside of the frame. If the moulding is to be painted, remember that all raw wood deserves a primer first.

How about wood planks? They can do fabulous things to a front door. Apply the planks right over the regular door facing. Use mastic, contact cement and/or nails. After the planks are mounted, sand the wood and coat it with a thick clear sealer. Be sure to move the door stop far enough to allow for the additional width of the new wood.

Cedar shingles are one of the quickest and easiest ways to give your house a face-lift. They are like magic for turning a drab door into a real delight. Mount the singles with short box nails, non-galvanized preferably because they rust and blend with the wood as it weathers.

Your front door probably gets more use than any other architectural accent in your home. Should it not also be one of the most exciting accents? Give it a change. Don't knock it!

—FRED JEROLE



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broadway

cruising to infidelity, lovers' quarrels to gay churches, the leather scene, the Christopher Street Docks, the queens, the studs, the older lovers, and so on. And del Valle has handled it all with kindness, warmth, tolerance, and even wisdom. There is satire here, but it is kindly satire, and a healing brand of comedy. It looks at the gay scene with an eye for flaws, but also a compassion for people. And he really is writing about love, hope, and affirmation

The cast of six, headed by author/director del Valle, are all well cast and able. They work well together, and play with both perception and style: Jerry Bell, as a blond male ingenue, all bubbling with enthusiasm for everything from Judy to Gay Lib; Martin Rivera as the excitable demi-queen who is so obsessed with watching Maria Montez in *Cobra Woman* on the late show she hardly has time for her lover—but who brandishes her nail file like a shiv when her honor is challenged; David Fernandez and Joe Esquibel as a pair of bad-ass leather types whose relationship encounters heavy weather when they discover they are both closet masochists, and del Valle and Barnett Keller as the older lovers who manage to sustain their relationship for twenty years, despite strains of boredom, habit, squabbles, infidelity—to be separated finally only by death. It seems hardly fair to single out any one of a cast which works so well as a unit, but I find I must put in an extra word for David Fernandez. This ex-rock singer is tall, lanky, and cheek-bonily handsome. He acts well in a number of roles, sings well, and moves well. And he also has that kind of idealistic raw-boned face you could happily accept as a young Abe Lincoln—or as the wistful young stud he plays in this show, who supplements nature's gifts by wearing a beer can in the crotch of his Levi's. His orgasmic Mick Jagger/Jim Morrison rock number, "At the Trucks," was not the only show-stopper, but it was the one which completely brought down the house and elicited whoops of delight from a bevy of queens in the audience

The New York critics did not review this one at all

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Backaches certainly can bother anyone. And they can have any number of possible causes: slipped disc, improper alignment of vertebrae, muscular spasm or just too much strain, which comes most often after shoveling snow or any such unusual physical exertion to which your back muscles are not accustomed.

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For a real bone problem, of course, professional help is needed, but the spasms, strains and other muscular maladies can and should be taken care of before they start.

We've all heard that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, and in this case it couldn't be more true, especially if you've ever had to walk with a painful stoop, take countless heat treatments and massages, or miss out on something you really wanted to do because of your darned sore back.

The only way to prevent sore back muscles is to keep them in good tone, properly conditioned by exercise. And you will find an added benefit in exercising these muscles, as well-developed lower back muscles add a lot of shape and beauty to your torso.

Featured here are some of the exercises which are most beneficial to the lower back.

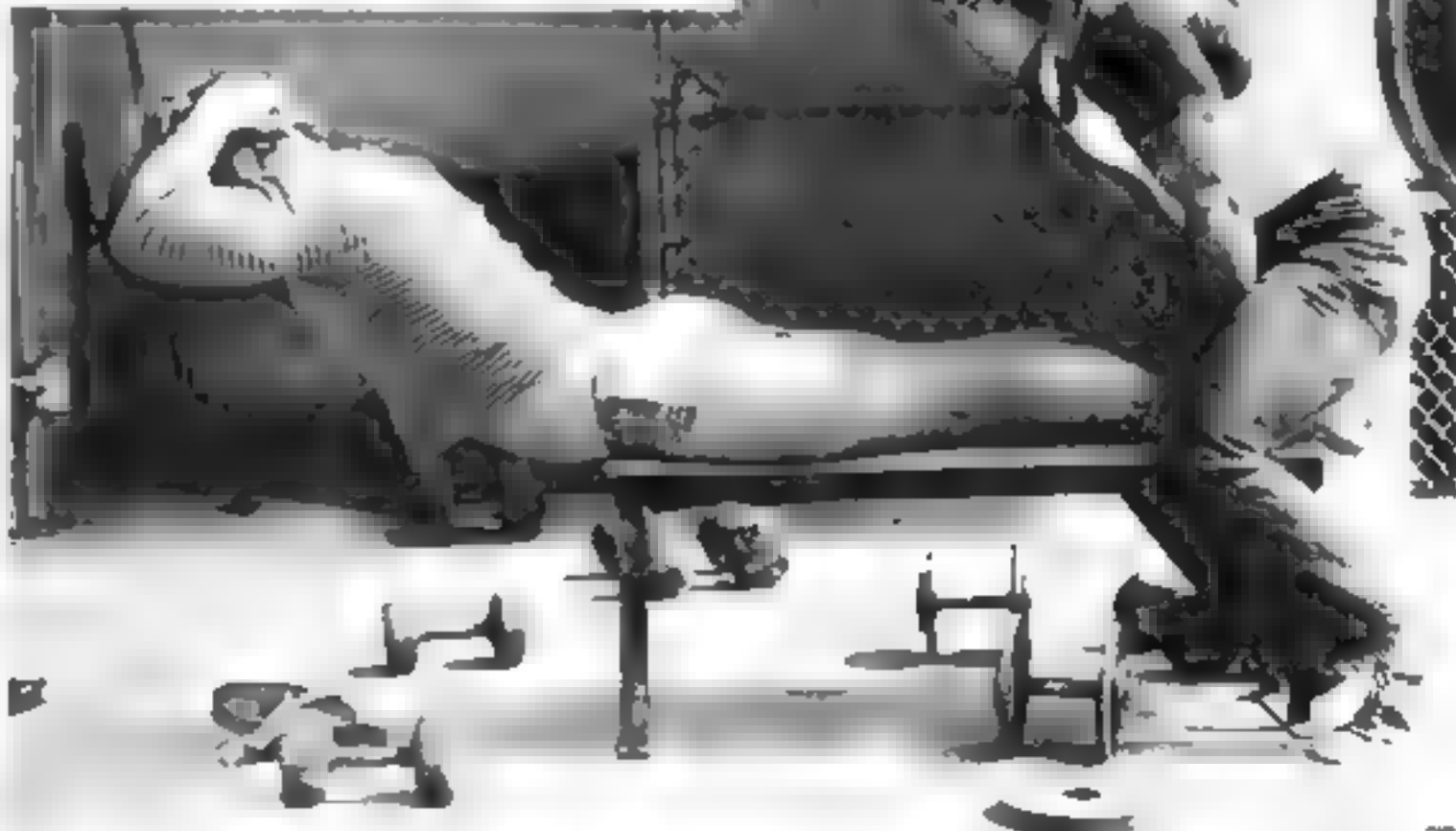


Toe-touching is the most simple and probably the best because it can be done without weights or equipment, so you can do it immediately and at your convenience. Remember to start out slow. The idea is to stretch and develop

those muscles, not to strain them. There's no need to hurry. Make each movement slow and deliberate.



The Stiff-legged Dead Weight should be attempted only after conditioning your back with toe touches for a few weeks. The weight should not be too heavy and the exercise should be performed slowly and deliberately with knees locked in a straight position.



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work should not have to take more than ten minutes per session for about two sessions a week, remembering to keep those sessions regular enough to keep your back muscles limber and strong.

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rick gates

wanted to make money. I knew that they wanted to sell seats. And I knew that they figured my bare ass would help them do it. And so I had a lot of qualms. Frankly, I didn't trust them, and as a result I wasn't giving them my best work. So finally, Jerry had a big talk with me, and we got a lot of things out in the air, and I felt a little better about the whole thing after that. You see, to me nudity is one thing, and playing up to somebody's lecherous hang ups is quite another. I'm really a pretty private sort of guy, and I just don't want to be exploited sexually."

Actually, Rick was not the only one with qualms about the film. Arthur Franz, playing his teacher, was even more concerned about playing a homosexual character. One scene, for instance, called for Franz to kiss Rick on the cheek, and when the time came to shoot it, he refused flatly to do so. "Well," Rick joked facetiously on the set, "that's what you get for hiring heterosexuals to play homosexuals!" Jerry Gordon looked at him and replied icily, "Oh, I thought I had hired actors."

To avoid an instant replay of that situation when it came time to film Rick's nude love scene with Richard Rowley, Gordon saw to it that the two young actors shared a cabin while on location, so that they could learn to feel comfortable and at ease with each other before being asked to kiss passionately on camera. I asked Rick just how a heterosexual actor psyches himself up to play a highly erotic homosexual love scene.

"I just had to do what the character would do," he responded simply. "What he was doing was only seeing the best aspects. I was seeing Dean the way a lover would see his beloved. And trying to send him images of how wonderful it was going to be, sexually, between us. Sexually, and otherwise. The kind of relationship we would have. Trying to allay his fears by sending him images of, 'This is all right. I know what I'm doing. Your fears are unfounded. They have nothing to do with reality.'"

Did Rick have any specific reactions to his first kiss onscreen or off from another man?

"Yes, I came away with the realization of how I must have been torturing

girls all these years with my beard! I've got sensitive skin, but I'm sure it's not as sensitive as a girl's. So I try to be more conscientious about my shaving these days. But it didn't get me any more interested in guys, if that's what you mean. I've just never been sexually attracted to another guy. When I was working on this film, I tried to visualize myself having sex with a close male friend, but it just doesn't do anything for me. Of course, on the intellectual level, it's only logical that if you love someone—sex being an expression of love—it shouldn't make any difference if they are male or female. And I do have male friends whom I love very deeply. But I have no interest in having sex with them. I guess I'm hopelessly heterosexual." He shrugged almost apologetically.

"Oh, well," I consoled. "Nobody's perfect."

This, then, is the real Rick Gates behind the second-hand stories—reticent only in that he values his privacy, difficult only in that he is a perfectionist at his work, "square" only in that he does not feel the need to put on affectations to try to conform to someone else's opinion of what he should be. As an actor, he is a talent well worth watching, and as a man, he is an ingratiating personality well worth knowing.





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films

written as such. There is a specific drag queen from a famous team called Maurice and Lamont. I think it was the younger of the two. I guess Maurice was the youngest. I'm not sure. She looked and was made up to look like the youngest of the pair, Maurice and Lamont. Her dialogue was the same, from her opening line standing in the bathtub, "My God!" was said with that same kind of bass falsetto.

Me: What about Bruce Davison?

Fellow: He shows quite a range. That was quite a step from that rat movie

Me. Oh yeah, *Willard*.

Tom O'Horgan has invaded the film world with Ionesco's absurdist parable *Rhinoceros*. The American Film Theatre has again given me sleepless nights and changed another facet of my life. For about a week I wandered around in a daze saying, "That's absurd."

"To renew the language is to renew the conception, the vision of the world

Revolution consists in bringing about a change in mental attitudes." That's Eugene Ionesco.

The era of Ionesco's international acceptance as a major literary figure dawned with the opening of his play *Rhinoceros* in 1960, in London, directed by Orson Welles with Sir Laurence Olivier as Berenger. Since that time the main thrust of the absurdist movement has been absorbed and has not yet germinated absurdism to a true classic stature. It may seem strange that *Rhinoceros* has taken root in the world of film, with films' inherent naturalism. But it is not strange that it has appeared in the art form of the world culture, i.e., film, and at a time when only the absurd seems honest, or capable of honesty.

Knee-deep in the muck of nostalgia, attentive only to the criticism of our sentimentality, and ready to fight for only that weak human quality, the population is mirrored in *Rhinoceros* which was intended to mirror pre-Nazi Germany. At a time when the population seems to have forgotten the mistakes of the past, when common man lives like a callous Count, and yet has a melan-

cholia about his fantasies like a misty-eyed dandy, remembering fondly the wasteland of the Fifties, at this time the only acceptable art appears to be a mockery of Art Deco. The Andrews Sisters at the U.S.O. war wheel canteen has become a symbol of innocence. No wonder that *Rhinoceros* twists its silliness into a reflection of our own terror, a terror we ignore as the world feels threatened.

Lesson One: How not to be seen.

Lesson Two: Why not to be seen.

Monty Python, in the tradition of... well... not really faithful to any tradition but in the interest of... well... not completely concerned with the survival of, yet certainly employing the techniques of the "goon" show, presents *And Now for Something Completely Different*. Actually, more of an absurd laugh-in blackouts, no, more of an organized panic about what makes sense and what has value, it only turns everything upside down and ends up the real underground training film it is. Maybe it's just a film for us to remember how to laugh when the absurdity has already turned up at a high level of consciousness accompanied by the ter-

There is nothing to be afraid of. It could be worse, but then maybe how worse it already is. If you can't laugh, then you have already lost the game no matter what the situation really is. That's the kind of movie it is that won't be on TV but belongs nowhere else, except maybe FILMEX Saturday midnight. Yes, on TV and just after the news too.

Monty Python is a group of concerned comics, I think, that have gone out on a search for the missing funny-bone of man—modern man. They forge through all forms of visual fantasies in order to maintain perspective of reality.

Flesh for Frankenstein not only has the best 3-D system imaginable, it exhibits the most intelligent use of that process. The morality of the film is an altogether different question. Technically and artistically the film is a triumph that sways the audience to accepting the film's content. The mind is placed into a moral crisis. Every person that sees it is grateful for having seen it but does not

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believe that anyone else should be allowed to see it.

What, you may ask, is so awful?

It is not known just how film images affect the subconscious of the mentally unbalanced. Many correlations have been made between film violence and crime. If ever a film could be responsible for perverse crimes, then this film would qualify before all others. It has also been argued that film violence is cathartic and purges the subconscious. In that case, this film could single-handedly put an end to violent sex crimes.

The most promising thing about this Andy Warhol-Carlo Ponti production is Joe Dallesandro. He seems finally ready to begin a career as an actor. He walks through the film with its thick dialogue and syrupy performances with the non-balance of a Dennis Hopper and the grace and sensitive eccentricity of a James Dean.

Paul Morrissey's direction shows that he may still not be ready to give up his attempts at natural documentary individual styles of performance for professional performances but he is certainly capable of putting a real film together in every other respect.

The American Film Theatre's production of *Luther* is a lush yet lurid visual procession that unveils John Osborne's painful play as a simple and vulgar tragedy. Scriptwriter Edward Anhalt (*Jeckel*) has transformed its Brechtian form into a smooth-flowing gut of a film and the Freudian content he has shipped raw to the film's director. British director Guy Greene, (*The Magus*, *The Light in the Piazza*, and *Patch of Blue*) has not only allowed performances of some of the world's greatest talents to stand forth and be accepted as to the play individually but he has given the play, at the same time, a strong sense of continuity through his highly imaginative filmic staging. Mr. Greene, a former cinematographer (*Great Expectations*, *Oliver Twist*, *Captain Horatio Hornblower*), has worked well with his cinematographer to achieve this. Cinematographer Freddie Young has translated the tormented lives of great men onto a couple of hours of celluloid before (*Lust for Life*, *Lawrence of Arabia*, *Dr. Zhivago*) and much credit for the imaginative beauty of *Luther* must surely go to him.

Stacy Keach, who will be remembered for his lead role in *Fat City*, is acclaimed by that greatest of all living directors, John Huston, to be a rare and precious talent. "I doubt that audiences will ever go to see Stacy Keach, the individual. They will go to see whatever character he projects—a traveling executioner, a sad, forbearing prince, a Wright brother, a fighter beginning to walk on his heels. Each character is a star in itself. He, Stacy, is a constellation."

The star he projects in *Luther* shines bright among so many others: The flamboyant Welsh actor Hugh Griffith (*The Fixer*, *Oliver*, *Tom Jones*, *Exodus*, *Ben Hur*, *The Beggars Opera*) portrays Tetzl with gloriously vivid decadence and corruption. Patrick Magee, the British character actor often found in sinister roles (*The Servant*, *The Marat/Sade*) plays Hans. The Knight, raconteur of the play, is devilishly interpreted by Julian Glover (*Tom Jones*, *Alfred the Great*, *The Adding Machine*).

Martin Luther, unlike Joan of Arc or Thomas More, was a martyr to no cause but his own. This single fact is

perhaps the reason that the play *Luther*—unlike *Joan of Arc* or *Man for All Seasons*—must be more of a psychological study than a sociological one. The play shows a real and simple vulgar man with the argument of centuries of Western thought tearing at his cramped German guts. It does this not only by examining his innermosts but by also showing that the locks of his hair—like any man—is tousled by the wind and that perhaps Luther alone is unaware of such a simple fact. It is interesting also to note that these three great films can show clearly the evolution of Western thought from the silly righteousness of the Crusades to the reactionary indulgences of individualism in the Reformation to More's definition of moral character in a social world. But *Luther* stands alone among historical plays in its exploration of guilt and self-doubt. It stands to ask from where does the faith come for the individual to act and yet once having acted it whimpers that the individual is still free to denounce the consequences of his own actions. I have been profoundly twisted.

—DAVID MINTON

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history

Nazi Party homosexuals, which led directly to the extermination of the great German homophile movement, and the slaughter of tens of thousands of Gays (identified by pink or lavender triangle armbands) in Hitler's death camps.

Some feel that to mention this today is to throw a morbid pall over what should be a joyous occasion. I am not opposed to the joyous sense of the occasion. But I think that our annual display to the world must show many moods, just as gay experience is many-faceted. And any gay leader who prepares a short-term balance sheet of our movement's accomplishments while ignoring that terrible holocaust which swept away the once remarkably successful German homophile movement, is a fool.

In 35 years German Gays grew from fear and obscurity to near national success, launching similar cause-groups in several other countries, and then were hit by a tidal wave. There are too many parallels between that movement and ours, indeed too many possible parallels between pre-Hitler Germany and the U.S. today, for us not to be concerned "lest we go down that road again." We cannot reliably assess our own progress and prospects without an astute understanding of both American and German social history.

I don't mean to be alarmist. The situations are not identical. I am not predicting that America *will* follow the path Germany took in 1933. I am saying that there is enough similarity that we should be concerned, lest forgetting our history, we be condemned to repeat it. If our aims are to be achieved, we must

relate them, as German Gays tried too late to do, to the thrust of broader social movements (viable social forces, not just romantic adventurism), lest we be swept away by extraneous tides.

WHAT IS "GROLP MEMORY"?

Have we any sort of group memory? One might ask that in a metaphysical sense: Tolstoy and Jung have suggested that the human race, or segments of it, possess a sort of pervasive over-soul of which individual psyches are but the expression. For those who find that view too exotic, one might sociologically define the notion of group memory pragmatically, as the assortment of records, attitudes and conditioned behaviors which shape a nation, minority or sect's experience.

Does the individual Gay, from youngest age, have already some inkling, not simply of difference, but of the persecution which has long been our share? Or does he merely discover bias firsthand, and learn later how many have suffered before him?

We often act as if the experience of preceding generations of Gays were of no importance, as if thousands of lives of quiet desperation had no tug on our sympathy, as if we could learn nothing from them that would be useful to our lives. Had we no personal stake in Stonewall? Or San Francisco's Black Cat—or Los Angeles'? Or Sharps Park or Baltimore's Pepper Hill Club? Have we met no one whose life was scarred by the great witch-hunts of Miami, Pasadena, Boise, or by McCarthy? Do we appreciate the struggle it took 25 years ago to get even *Physique Pictorial* started?

Are the agonies of Casement, Eulenburg, Ulrichs, Wilde or Ludwig foreign to us? Or the dozen men I shall never meet who

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are being unfairly arrested somewhere in this land of the free even as I write this? Is the ecstasy of Whitman, Michaelangelo, Brand, Georg, or Carpenter nothing to us? They should be part of our group memory, not because that is some *duty*, but because we would be the richer for it

THE GRANDFATHER OF AMERICA'S GAY MOVEMENT

Have you ever heard of Henry Gerber, forgotten grandfather of America's homophile movement, who tried repeatedly between 1924 and 1950 to get some sort of organization going to represent gay interests?

Gerber (1892-1972) came from Bavaria to Chicago early in World War I and was interned as an enemy alien. He served in the American Army of Occupation at Coblenz on the Rhine. There he subscribed to several German homophile publications and visited the organizational headquarters.

Back in Chicago, Gerber, nagged by the injustice Gays suffered in his adopted land, worked to form the Society for Human Rights, modeled and named after the German law reform coalition. With the aid of his post office supervisor, he drew up a charter for this earliest known American gay rights group and began hunting prospective members.

"The average homosexual, I found, was ignorant concerning himself. Others were fearful . . . frantic, depraved . . . blasé totally cowed." Knowing the social impact of Hirschfeld's star-studded petition for law reform, he sought support from professionals of note, but "the only support I got was from poor people: John, a preacher who earned his room and board by preaching to small groups of Negroes; Al, an indigent laundry queen; and Ralph, whose job with the railroad was in jeopardy

when his nature became known. These were the national officers of the Society. . . . I realized this start was dead wrong, but after all, movements always start small . . ."

Gerber admitted in *ONE* magazine (September, 1962) that he'd naively had little idea what obstacles might arise. His goals were to recruit as many homosexuals (only) as possible; to stage public lectures on the truth about homosexuality; to discourage the seduction of adolescents, to publish a magazine to inform the homophile world of the effort (no advocating of sex acts; just a forum for discussion); so that "through self-discipline, homophiles would win the confidence and assistance of legal authorities" who could "be educated on the futility of long prison terms for those committing homosexual acts."

SHR incorporated in 1924, published two issues of *Friendship & Freedom* (does anyone have copies?), then lightning struck. (I am indebted for one document here to Jonathan Katz, who is preparing a history of Gays in America.) Though bisexuals were excluded from membership, that "laundry queen," it seemed, had a wife, who complained to a social worker, who in turn called the cops, who entered Gerber's quarters one Sunday after 2 A.M. Pretending to be hunting "a boy" ("I suppose . . . they . . . hoped to find us in bed. They could not imagine homosexuals in any other way."), they seized without warrant his typewriter (the only thing he got back) and all personal and group records, diaries and his notary public certification. He was jailed for the night and taken with a group to Chicago Avenue police court next day. A friendly officer showed him a front-page article in Hearst's *Chicago Examiner* ("Strange Sex Cult Exposed") alleging that the group had performed sexuality in view of Al's wife and children.

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Only a powder puff, allegedly found in Gerber's room, and a few "shocking" lines from his diary ("I love Karl") were introduced against him. After an extremely biased judge, threats from postal inspectors, an incompetent attorney, a second attorney moved the case to a courtroom where the defendants received something of an apology and were dismissed. Gerber had lost \$500 (a big sum then) and was bitter because no support had come from Chicago's bustling gay community.

The detective's last jab: "What was the idea of the Society for Human Rights anyway . . . to give you birds legal right to rape every boy on the street?"

Jobless, Gerber moved to New York, reentered the Army, serving 17 years on Governor's Island, then retired to Washington, D.C., on a \$20-a-month pension, upped to \$100 when he reenlisted briefly in late 1944.

In 1930 he had taken over *Contacts*, a pen-pals club started by Merlin Wand (surely a pseudonym?) and published its monthly mimeographed newsletter until September, 1939, when he abandoned the thankless task. Members bitched about the three-cent letter-forwarding charge and Gerber, hoping for more intellectual interchange, got tired of running just a dating bureau (not exclusive y gay). He also published, for one year during the Thirties, a *Contacts* literary magazine, *Chanticleer* (copies anyone?), apparently of discreet gay content.

HOW TO RECRUIT FOR A GAY CAUSE

George Mortenson (later to be an early Mattachine activist and for a while president of ONE Inc.) met Gerber and a soldier-companion in 1929, and attended gatherings at the home of another gay couple who tried pressing the pessimistic Gerber to help start an organization to advance the gay cause. Was it these meetings referred to in a 1946 letter to Gerber from his longtime New York friend, Frank McC, mentioning the failure of "the Dorian Brotherhood" in 1929 to get a solid start?

George Mortenson's memory of Gerber is not heavily detailed. He doubts that he met McC, who was described by Gerber about 1946 as looking very old and in bad health.

Another serviceman, who also (like this writer also) would later serve time as ONE's president, met Gerber and McC when *Contacts* folded, and has supplied an extensive three-way correspondence dating from 1940 to 1957. Together these three considered and tried various ways to organize American homosexuals.

Manuel BoyFrank had been writing and circulating a massive manuscript, *Men, Boys and Love*, in military circles for over ten years (he'd been in the army, navy and coast guard). ONE has published bits of this under the name of J.P. Starr. It was a curious composite, part justification of homosexuality as an historic natural educational system for boys, part defense of the old genteel army philosophy against the air force's strategic-bombing proponents. (Manuel says that many were shocked when they heard about *some* things in his book, "But they all wanted to read it.")

Growing up before World War I in the Oklahoma territory, Manuel had tasted the homosexual habit of cowboys and servicemen. He too was in the Rhineland Army of Occupation, but knew nothing then of Gerber or the German homophile movement. Like Gerber, he was itching for an organization to ameliorate the conditions of Gays.

For three years he importuned Gerber and McC to revive *Contacts* or to start a more relevant group. Gerber responded bitterly: he'd tried it in Chicago, and homosexuals won't sup-

port those who try to help them. Tired, Gerber was reconciled to quickie satisfactions in theatre seats.

McC seemed to lack Gerber's science-and-law-reform commitment, but tried to gather some sort of consciousness-raising co-op at his large house on W. 140th, advertising "House to Share." In 1944, as a device for keeping in touch with gay draftees, he launched an all-gay Manhattan branch of the U.S. Rocket Society (I knew some of the members listed).

About this time, Gerber became hot to start a new group: the Society Skirting Sex Superstitions. BoyFrank suggested as names the Dorians or the Androphiles, but Gerber wanted no revealing name. But to launch any effective organization, they needed other supporters. They now lived in different cities. Gerber and BoyFrank lacked gay personal associates and McC, who had many, could persuade none to make a commitment. Other correspondents were tentative.

Gerber had been posting long letters to publications which put down homosexuality (*Time*, on their April 44 bit on the Lonergan case), and some were printed pseudonymously in free-thinking magazines. He conceived his new group chiefly as a "committee of correspondence" to write such educational letters—like the committees which preheated America's revolution. BoyFrank wanted a large membership (anathema to Gerber), agreeing with McC in one letter that we need to create a new culture, not just change sex laws.

Gerber faced a court-martial on homosexual charges during his last enlistment, but the psychiatrist said pompously that since he preferred mutual masturbation, he was not homosexual ("I nearly fell off my chair! All my life fighting for the cause.") But despite such psychocrap, the anti-religious Gerber kept his faith in the Gospel according to Freud.

Desperately seeking supporters, the three tried to recruit in other pen-pal clubs, with sometimes unnerving results. For those unfamiliar with bars, such clubs were then a relatively safe form of cruising, if you didn't rush things. BoyFrank kept pushing also for an underground league of photo-purchasers, but Gerber noted McC's frequent troubles over his photo trading.

One of their correspondents (dropped as pro-religious) helped found in 1948 Philadelphia's Foundation for Social Integration. Were other Gerber contacts perhaps active in early Mattachine chapters, in New York's Metro Veteran's Benevolent Assn. (1947-54), a 1942 Boston group or New York's League, 1954-55? Or was his influence all but lost?

WHY SO LONG TO START?

Many who disdain the study of gay history have bitched because it took so long to start a gay rights movement in America. The Gerber-McC-BoyFrank correspondence helps explain that delay, as three reclusive men of varied temperaments struggled to define their gayness at a time when the subject was still generally unmentionable, and to enlist others in what seemed even to Gerber to be a hopeless cause.

Reading these letters (never intended for my eyes) I want to argue with Gerber, make friendly suggestions. "Look, man, you set up impossible conditions, thwarting your own declared objectives." My advice can't reach him—but are his letters a mirror in which I can recognize and correct my own self-defeating habits? We Gays have so few such mirrors.

In such a mirror, can we learn more about problems which still plague us? Can even those not involved in cause-groups find in this history some guidance for their personal lives? I think they can.

In Touch humor



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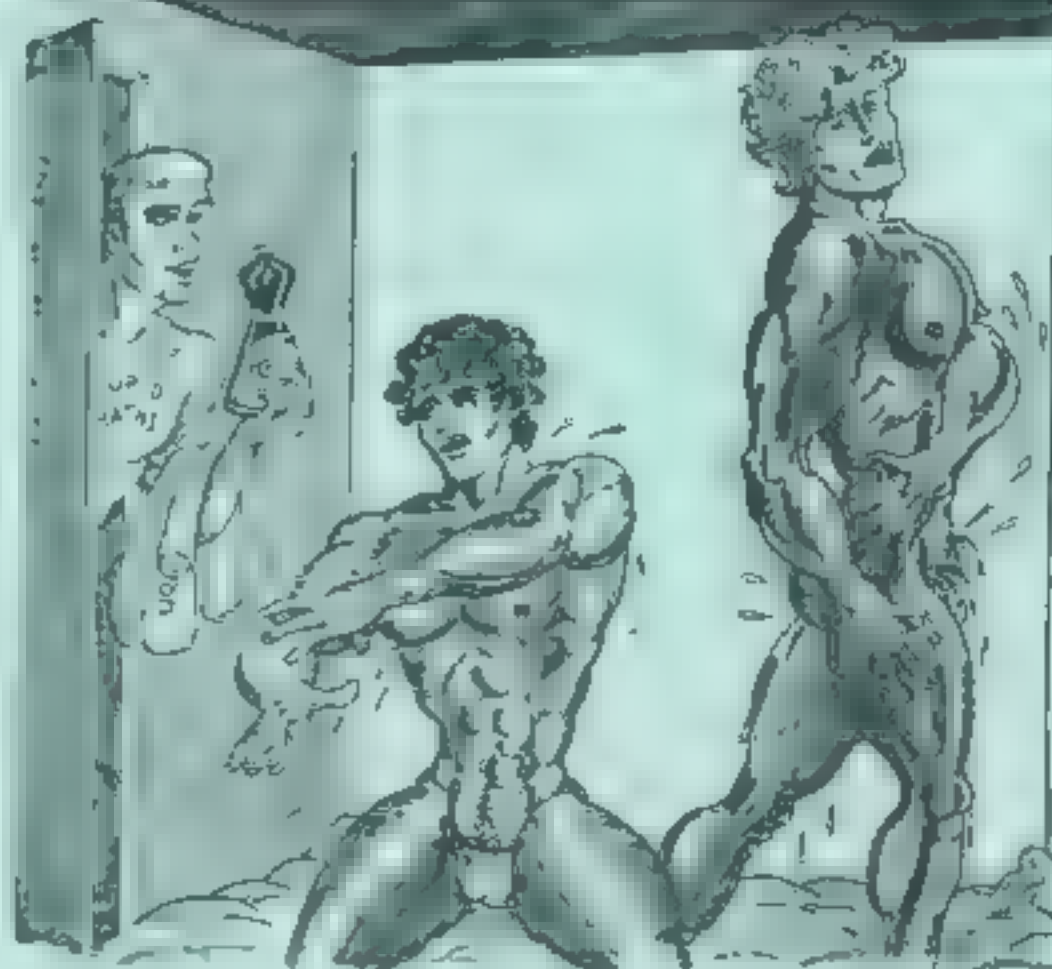


"Sweetheart . . . you hold up your end and I'll hold up mine!"

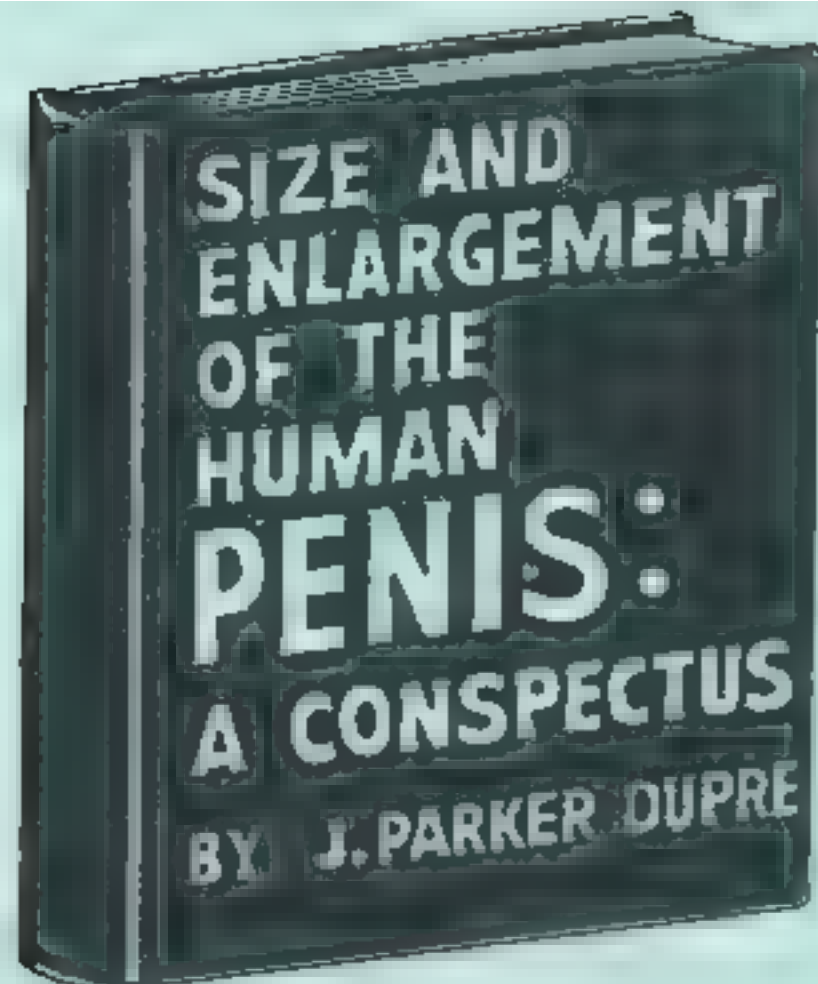


"Let's keep in touch. I'd like to see more of you, soon."

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he isn't immediately available, she throws in the sponge. At the end of the play Loy Gilbert, another locksmith, turns up, sticks a credit card in her door and -voilà! He departs with the riposte. "Love laughs at locksmiths but nobody laughs at Greenberg."

This jest goes over like a lead balloon. Somewhere along the way, Claudette wails to her son: "Oh Tim, your mother's too old for this!"

She's got it the wrong way around. A Community of Two is too old for her. In the Thirties and early Forties Miss Colbert was, hands-down, my favorite light screen comedienne. The years have been extremely kind to her and she still looks a knockout. She has been delightful and she still can be. But she needs something to be delightful in.

* * * *

Not since Laurette Taylor's unforgettable Amanda Wingfield in *The Glass Menagerie* have I been so moved by any performance in the theatre as I was by Jean Stapleton in *The Time of the Cuckoo* at the Ahmanson. When Shirley Booth originally played it at the old Empire Theatre (since torn down) in New York in 1952, I didn't consider the play anything much. But Jean Stapleton makes it great. This remarkable actress is annually awarded an Emmy for her work in "All in the Family." The big surprise is that she is even more effective on a stage. Her lonely, lost spinster, summering in Venice, is a gorgeous characterization; a fully dimensional, living, breathing woman, hopelessly entangled in the web of a professional Italian gigolo. Her emotional catharsis is shattering and heartbreaking, an experience she intimately shares with her audience. If anything is true, it's that Mrs. Archie Bunker has not even tapped the full potential of her talent. She is so at home at the Ahmanson's Pensione Fioria I actually thought I was back in Venice with her. The set by Broadway's Harry Horner is absolutely fantastic, far and away the best seen locally in many years. Beautifully lit by H.R. Poindexter, the morning sunrise is sheer poetry and a vision of loveliness. This, combined with the carillons and sounds of Venice, make for a thoroughly winning theatrical experience.

The entire cast is flawless and Joseph Hardy, who has been trying all year, finally catches the directorial brass ring here. His production is easily the finest example of Broadway-quality theatre the Pavilion complex has yet brought to its customers. Because of the careful attention to detail, Arthur Laurents' old play takes on a brand new life and Miss Stapleton makes it a feast of humor and bittersweet drama. The preview audience rocked with laughter at this exchange:

Leona: "We don't take sex lightly."

Renato: "Take it. Don't talk it. To a hungry child one brings ravioli. You're hungry, Miss Samish. Eat the ravioli."

Leona: "I'm not *that* hungry."

As Signora Fioria, owner of the Pensione, Tamara Toumanova, the ballerina, is superb. Heretofore, this role has been a supporting one with an accent. Nothing more. Mme. Toumanova turns it into a personal triumph. Indeed, she is so good she makes a star turn out of it. Anyone less professional than Miss Stapleton might have attempted to trim her sails a bit. After all, she's the star. But, as the star, she is far more interested in the best possible performance for the play so why not permit this gifted Russian to be sublime? Guillermo San Juan is absolutely terrific as Mauro, the typical 10-year-old Venetian urchin who connects up the Black Market with rich Americans. Charlotte Rae is delightfully droll as Mrs. McIlhenny. Cesare Danova is extraordinarily believable as Renato and his scenes with Jean are so beautifully crafted they become true works of art. Which brings me to 25-year-old Ernest Thompson. He is not only talented, he is what is known in some circles as a hot number. After intermission he takes his clothes off (don't get excited) and appears in an extremely modest bathing suit. However, his physique ain't modest and, if he stayed that way much longer onstage without going up to his room to change for a night on the town, my attention might have been irreparably distracted from the sheer brilliance of the unfolding drama.

* * * *

Oliver Hailey's remarkably original comedy, *Father's Day*, in San Diego's Off Broadway has had a curious history. It enjoyed critical acclaim at the Mark Taper Forum, subsequently went on to Broadway and promptly expired after

one performance. This is hard for me to fathom as I laughed myself into the middle of next week at this version. The lines are so damn funny I succeeded in breaking my pencil point.

Louise: "Father's Day was perpetuated by the experts and we'll have none of it." "I stay away from girlish groups since I had a bad experience with a Campfire Girl." "She even volunteered to keep the kids. There's a lot of June Allyson in that woman." "I bought a sex manual showing 125 positions plus a supplement of 10 more never tried on this Continent."

And upon hearing a Chopin Prelude played from an upper balcony: "Hey there! My cat hates Chopin. How about a little Debussy for my pussy?"

With this I fell on the floor. From there I heard the line: "In life, there are no intermissions."

And guess what came next?

Father's Day is not about dear old Dad. It's about three high-rise condominium ladies, all tragically divorced, who are trying to face the future without their husbands. The second act shifts gears drastically and presents the

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cutting edge of this situation. They all wonder where they have failed and, in the case of Louise, she wants her ex-husband to divorce his new wife and remarry her. Carole Cook plays this part and I would fly anywhere in the world to see her. She is a superb artist. She can play anything, even the telephone book. She has a gorgeous sense of fun and, when necessary, can break your heart. In one indelible scene she begs her own husband, Tom Troupe (this seems to be a week for husbands and wives), to take her back. Strangely enough, her husband's name in the play is Tom and he also serves as her director. Is it any wonder, then, that she plays this scene with tears streaming down her face that look suspiciously real? You might call this team good troupers but check out the nearest exits first. Barbara Rush is a lady of real class, a persuasive actress and an authentic beauty. But she is getting a bit pudgy to risk knitted stacks onstage. Jordan Rhodes flows through the theatre like a breath of fresh air and Paul Kent is thoroughly charming as a husband who enjoys going to bed with men occasionally as a change of pace

from his wife. Mr. Troupe's direction is able and the patio set by Nobel Dinse is very clever. It is effective in ways that haven't even been tried before. Which brings me to Mr. Oliver Hailey and Broadway. Too bad about that. Had he demanded Carole Cook, his brainchild could have flourished there.

* * * *

Judy Garland's dream was to play the Palace. Charles Pierce's dream was to play the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion and the other evening over 3,000 of his screaming fans helped him realize it. You knew history was being made from the moment that glorious 18-piece orchestra rose from the pit in a medley of the tunes identified through the years with Charles. And, when the Music Center curtain swept elegantly up to reveal him reclining center stage a-glitter with jewels and wraparound furs, the packed auditorium rose to its collective feet and gave him a standing ovation. This was only fitting as Mr. P. had done his homework, burned the midnight oil and had been rehearsing since one o'clock in the afternoon for the occasion. The result was a brilliant show, beautifully paced, with fresh, hilarious material. The old standbys were there: Bette and Tallulah, Carol Channing, Mae West and Jeanette MacDonald on her swing. But they had clever new lines and Charles had added Maria Montez, Gloria Swanson and Katharine Hepburn to his repertoire. Many high-style, bouffant drags were on hand which I think constitutes unfair competition from the audience. They were on the arms of some extremely attractive men (how *do* they do it?). Little peals of laughter sprang up from various groups here and there and in the balcony as an endless procession of Joan Crawfords made their entrances. Most of Charles' new material is of the convulsive kind.

"I once was in love with an Eskimo but it was so cold we had to break it off."

"I knew an Alaskan lesbian. She was a Klondike."

"Richard took Pat off his income tax and why not? She's a total loss anyway."

As Gloria Swanson: "I was in prison once with an ill-fitting turban."

And as Butterfly McQueen in *Gone With the Wind*:

"Now that Lincoln has freed the

slaves, Miz Scarlett, you can pick your own fuckin' cotton!"

The gowns he wears have always been great but, for the Music Center, he has produced a series of eye-popping creations that are high-water marks even for him.

Sally Rand is also on the program and she admits to being born in 1904. For a lady that age I guess what she does is extraordinary. Certainly her exit through the flies a la Peter Pan caused me to sit bolt upright in my seat. Thom Phillips, unbilled and a last-minute addition to the show, appears as a doughboy in the first act and sings a medley of World War I songs in fine style. However, his post-intermission material is not as good, his voice falters in delivery and his sailor suit ill becomes his fire-hydrant frame. I would also cut Charles' Elizabeth and Essex routine. His fans come to see him as the epitome of high camp and serious interludes are best left to Helen Hayes. But the evening is, beyond question, a sensation. Backstage, Mr. Pierce was literally swamped by his admirers. As is his wont, he was passing out champagne to one and all. I stood cheek-by-jowl with such celebrities as Paul Lynde, David Miller (the April centerfold for *IN TOUCH*), looking more gorgeous than any 20-year-old legally has any right to look, and Kevin Thomas of the *Times*. Mr. Papich, the producer behind it all, entered and embraced Charles:

"Well, Charles, we made it. It was a triumph. We're going on to Carnegie Hall."

To which Charles shrieked: "Oh, Stephen! I'm legitimate at last!"

—ALLAN LEOPOLD



Backstage after Charles Pierce's Dorothy Chandler concert are (left to right) Perry Paulding; In Touch Theatre critic, Allan Leopold, Charles, and In Touch's April Discovery, David Miller.

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more theatre

Although the critics of the leading San Francisco dailies were divided in their opinion of it (and one of them, at least, severely critical), William Ball's production of *The Cherry Orchard* for the American Conservatory Theatre was, in my estimation, much to be admired.

The gentleman of the press who so strongly disapproved of it, calling Ball's interpretation much too farcical for a faithful rendering of Chekhov's "drama," is obviously of that school which believes that everything Russian must be dour, grim, and utterly devoid of any humor. Considering all the existing evidence which shows how Chekhov *really* intended his plays to be performed, it is amazing how many people (supposedly literate and informed) cling stubbornly to the idea, shared by some of the S.F. drama critics, that everything Russian must be dour, grim, etc., etc.

For in several biographies of Chekhov, and even in Stanislavsky's *My Life in Art*, stories are repeated again and again how unhappy Chekhov was with the way Stanislavsky staged his plays, how he felt that the famed regisseur had "ruined" his work by heavy-handed direction, how he threatened over and over again to withdraw from the Moscow Art Theatre (it was only Nemirovich-Danchenko who persuaded him to remain with the company as a resident playwright) and how, on more than one occasion, he ran down the aisle of the theatre at rehearsals, shouting, "No, no! The play is a comedy. When will you understand? The play is a *comedy*!"

Still Stanislavsky persisted in directing *The Cherry Orchard*, as well as other Chekhov plays, as a "drama" and so have most American directors who have tackled the work.

It is refreshing, therefore, to note that William Ball has had the sheer guts and gall to defy tradition and has honored Chekhov's own wishes in his amusing and often eloquent production for ACT in San Francisco.

Nothing of the play's deeper meaning has been lost because of this approach. On the contrary, the "drama" has been heightened by the contrast. The absurdity of the characters and the futility of their lives have been made even more

touching and poignant, and the play's symbolism—i.e., the decay and death of an old society (with the chopping down of the cherry orchard and the demise of the aged servant, Firs) and the rise of a new order (when the son of a former serf is financially able to purchase the estate and evict the aristocrats)—the meaning of all this is dramatized with greater clarity. The more tender moments, the pathetic "reaching out" to each other which the characters perform in attempts to fulfill themselves, the pauses which Chekhov has indicated in his text and which are, in reality (to paraphrase Dorothy Parker), "silences with things going on in them"—they are all *there*, and splendidly realized in Ball's production. The comic approach has paid off and the emotional moments are more effective because of it.

The technical excellence of ACT presentations is now accepted and *de rigueur* and seldom surprising; yet once in a while there is a touch which accomplishes miracles. In *The Cherry Orchard* it is the gentle breeze which stirs the curtains at the great windows. The stifling heat of summer, the stillness, the suffocation of life on the estate are at once projected and experienced sensually by the audience as the curtains flutter and billow, almost imperceptibly.

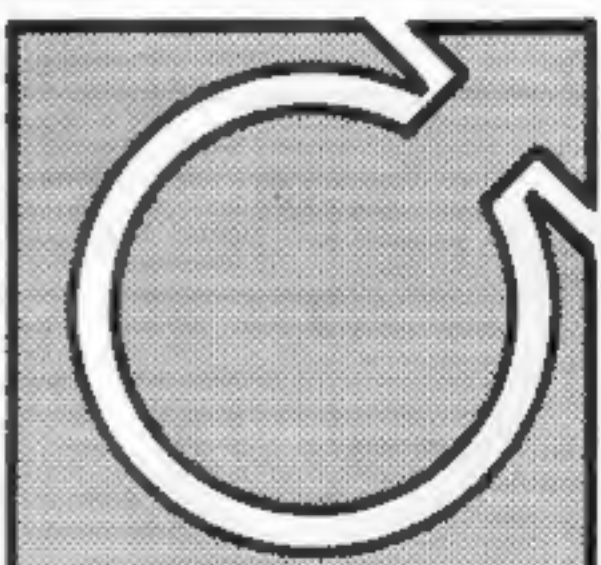
As Lyubov, the owner of the orchard and the estate, Sada Thompson (fresh from her recent Broadway triumph in *Twigs*) is charming, warm without being sentimental, foolish without being idiotic. One might be irritated with her, but one can understand the reason for her immobility, her inability to make the decision which would save her ancestral home, which might prevent the foreclosure. Hers is a polished and touching characterization.

No less splendid in their assignments are Peter Donat, bumbling yet lovable as Lyubov's brother Gayev, William Patterson, delicious as a landowner who is always trying to borrow money to pay interest on loans granted on his own property, and Dana Elcar, highly sympathetic as the businessman who, ironically against his will, purchases the estate and evicts the former owners. The entire cast, however, performs excellently well in this unique and satisfying production of Chekhov's greatest work.

The main reason that the American theatre has not yet developed a classical

repertoire is not because it has few colorful or interesting plays in its history. But what commercially minded producer, with his eye on modern trends and how they affect the box office, is going to take a chance on reviving a show that was a hit forty or fifty years ago? Until recently there have been few subscription and corporation-funded companies which have been willing to do so, either. And, after all, plays are not written to be studied in libraries. They are meant to be performed by live actors (supported by props, scenery and costumes) before breathing audiences. Only if productions of American plays are constantly presented can we develop a repertoire which is peculiar to our own culture.

We must be grateful, then, to the American Conservatory Theatre in San Francisco for presenting revivals of past successes, and each season (it appears) visiting the archives to dig out some show that was a hit ages ago (often before many of us were born) and producing it with both reverence and love. Such a play is *Broadway*, which has just joined the company's spring repertoire.



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This is a show which is famous in the annals of the American theatre. First produced in 1926, it was a smash hit and racked up an impressive total of 603 performances. I had heard of it, of course, but I'd never read it and I only had a vague idea of what it was all about. I'd certainly never seen it, and I don't know anyone else who had, either. The ACT production, therefore, bursts now upon the consciousness of most of us as if it were an entirely new play.

It's not hard to understand why Broadway was a great success in 1926. It's got everything—a picturesque setting, songs and dances, comedy, melodrama—you name it. It's all put together with skill and polish and a high degree of professionalism. What more, for that matter, does a show need to be a success in 1974?

The action takes place backstage at the Paradise Club. Here we meet the chorus girls—a tough, wise-cracking lot who rehearse, make their costume changes, feud and fight, and then put on their plastic smiles as they trip out to entertain the customers. Among these girls, of course, is one who is sweet and

innocent and much in love with the club's leading hoofer, even though she's being rushed by a top racketeer. The mob figures in the plot action, the "boys" knock off a bootlegger who has infringed on their territory, and the victim's girlfriend avenges his murder. All ends happily, however, and the young lovers, after traditional misunderstandings, get their dance act together and seem headed for the realization of their big dream of playing the Palace.

Corny? I suppose it sounds that way. But let me tell you, as staged by Edward Hastings, this show is not only a barrel of fun, it creates the feel of an era—a time out of our country's past, the time of the speakeasy and bootleg gin and bobbed hair and everything else that went with the Roaring Twenties. A score of popular songs serves as nostalgic and accurate background for the mad carryings-on. The dance routines are expert, the gags fly thick and fast, and the intrigue compels rapt attention.

Ed Hastings' direction of this potpourri is crisp, sharp and detailed. Deborah May as the sweet young innocent and Kathryn Crosby as the vengeful woman have the meatier roles among

the chorus girls, but they are all touching and amusing. (The costumes for the dance numbers are hilarious!) At first I thought James R. Winkler, a lean, lanky Hal LeRoy type (does anybody remember Harold Teen?) was a bit weak as the "sap" of a hoofer, but his charm grew on me as the play progressed and he certainly dances well. Ruth Kobart, playing a boozy, blowsy version of Sophie Tucker, belts out "St. Louis Woman" and "Some of These Days" and brings down the house. It's the best work I've ever seen her do. Charles Lanyer is attractive as the racketeer, but he doesn't project much sense of danger underneath his surface appeal. Ray Reinhardt, on the other hand, is just right as Nick, the manager and owner of the Paradise.

There may be those who think the plot creaks and the dialogue is filled with clichés, but you have to remember that in the Twenties such a plot wasn't creaky and remarks like "Banana oil!" and "Sex you!" were typical of the period. For my money, Broadway is a grab bag of top-flight entertainment and I'm grateful to ACT for giving us all a chance to see it.

—DOUGLAS DEAN

july's *IN TOUCH*



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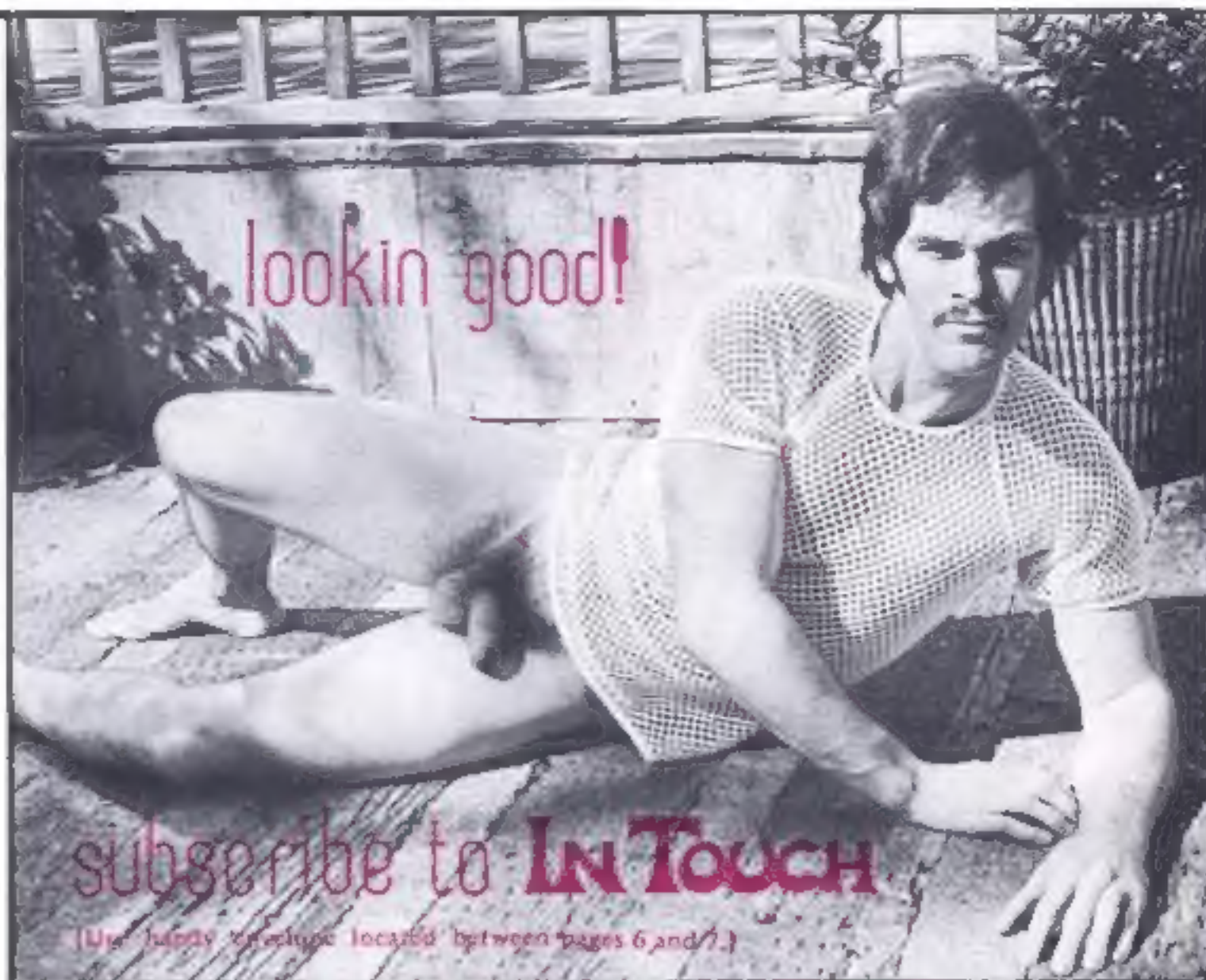
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